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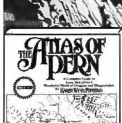

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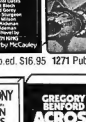

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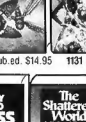

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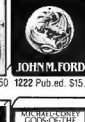

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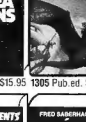

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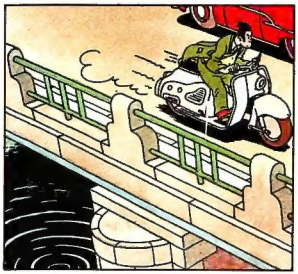

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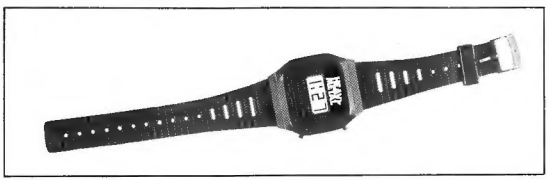

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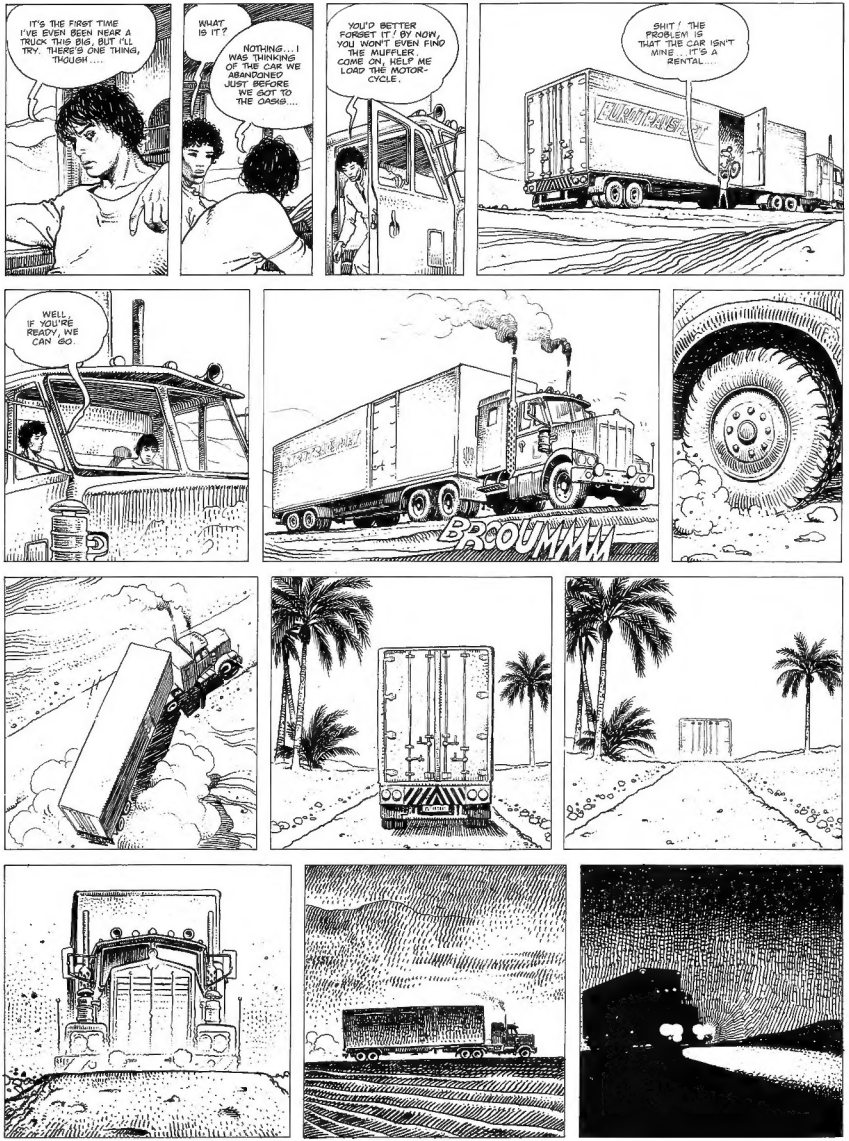
An Author in Search of Six Characters

by Milo Manara

LAST WE READ, BERSMAN AND LOU-LOU SEARCHED FOR THE MYSTERIOUS RASTAFARIAN.
AT THIS RATE, WE'LL NEVER CATCH UP TO THEM!
I'M GOING AS FAST AS I CAN. MAYBE...
THERE THEY ARE!
WE STOPPED!
ALL THE BETTER.
BUT... THERE'S NOBODY HERE.
NOR HERE! THE KEY IS STILL IN THE IGNITION!
THAT'S STRANGE! THE GAS TANK IS STILL HALF FULL...
I DON'T THINK THEY LEFT ON FOOT. WE WOULD HAVE SEEN THEM.
IT'S REALLY BIZARRE! I DON'T UNDERSTAND WHAT HAPPENED!
THEY CAN'T HAVE TURNED BACK-- WE WOULD HAVE SEEN THEM. THE ONLY THING WE CAN DO IS KEEP ON GOING.
WITH YOUR MOTOR-CYCLE?
NNNGO... LET'S LOAD IT ON THE TRUCK. DO YOU KNOW HOW TO DRIVE THIS THING?


IT'S THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVEN BEEN NEAR A TRUCK THIS BIG, BUT I'LL TRY. THERE'S ONE THING, THOUGH...
WHAT IS IT?
NOTHING... I WAS THINKING OF THE CAR WE ABANDONED JUST BEFORE WE GOT TO THE OASIS...
YOU'D BETTER FORGET IT / BY NOW, YOU WON'T EVEN FIND THE MUFFLER. COME ON, HELP ME LOAD THE MOTOR-CYCLE.
SHIT / THE PROBLEM IS THAT THE CAR ISN'T MINE... IT'S A RENTAL...
WELL, IF YOU'RE READY, WE CAN GO.
BROUMMM

TIRED?
NOT REALLY.
LOOK AT ALL THOSE LIGHTS DOWN THERE!!! WHAT CAN IT BE?
BAH!
LET'S GO TAKE A LOOK.
THIS IS A STRANGE PLACE. I THINK YOU SHOULD STAY HERE AND LOOK AFTER THE TRUCK. I'M GOING TO TAKE A STROLL AROUND THE PREMISES. JUST MAKE SURE THAT NOBODY TOUCHES THAT BAG. NOTHING MUST HAPPEN TO IT. IT'S OF THE UTMOST IMPORTANCE!
OKAY!! DON'T WORRY.
MISS DOUGH! WHERE IS LOU-LOU?

MR. BERGMAN, WHERE IS THE BAG?
DON'T WORRY ABOUT THE BAG. IT'S IN A SAFE PLACE. WHERE IS LOU-LOU?
I'M NOT AT ALL WORRIED ABOUT THE BAG. I ONLY WANT TO KNOW IF YOU HAVE IT BECAUSE I AM SURE THAT IT WON'T BE LONG BEFORE YOU WILL BRING IT TO ME ON YOUR OWN. IT'S WRITTEN IN THE SCRIPT!
I HAVE NOTHING TO DO WITH THE SCRIPT, IF YOU REALLY WANT TO KNOW! I ASKED YOU A QUESTION: WHERE IS LOU-LOU?
HA-HA-HA! POOR BERGMAN!
SO, YOU THINK THE SCRIPT DOESN'T CONCERN YOU, MR. BERGMAN! HAVE YOU ASKED YOURSELF WHY MR. BO AND I ARE HERE? DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT WE FOLLOWED YOU AND THAT LITTLE GOOSE OF YOURS? YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND ME, DO YOU, MR. BERGMAN?
WE ARE HERE BECAUSE THAT'S WHAT'S WRITTEN IN THE SCRIPT, BERGMAN! AND THAT'S WHY YOU AND ALL THESE OTHER PEOPLE ARE HERE, TOO!
COME ON, GIVE ME THAT BAG AND LEAVE! YOUR ROLE IS FINISHED. YOU HAVE TO LEAVE THE STAGE.
BUT... BUT...
GIVE ME THAT BAG, BERGMAN. OR WOULD YOU RATHER MR. BO ASKED YOU FOR IT?
I WANT TO SEE LOU-LOU BEFORE I DO ANY-THING.
NO, NO, LET HIM BE, MR. BO. WE WILL TAKE HIM TO HIS LOU-LOU!
FOLLOW ME, BERGMAN!
YOU SEE, BERGMAN, LOU-LOU AGREED TO PLAY A ROLE IN THIS STORY--WHETHER SHE'S HAPPY ABOUT IT OR NOT I DON'T KNOW....
AND THE SCRIPT IS VERY CLEAR. LOU-LOU'S PRESENCE IS JUSTIFIED ONLY BECAUSE SHE IS THE EROTIC ELEMENT IN THIS STORY. SHE MUST HAVE A STRONG SEXUAL IMPACT....

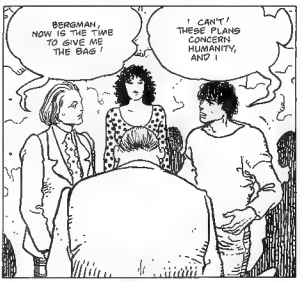
SHE MUST BE THE VERY IMAGE OF LASCIVIOUSNESS THE ESSENCE OF FORBIDDEN PLEASURES.
HERE WE ARE LOU-LOU IS IN HERE
LOU-LOU WHAT DID THEY DO TO YOU?
MMHH MHHH
WE CERTAINLY DIDN'T HURT YOU, DID WE, LOU-LOU?
MMHHH MMHHHH
WE ONLY FORCED HER TO THINK THINGS OVER DO YOU REMEMBER, LOU-LOU, WHEN YOU WERE LOCKED IN THE RESTROOM OF THAT BAR?
DID YOU EVER ASK YOURSELF WHY YOUR UNDERPANTS FELL IN THE TOILET? OR WHY BERGMAN, WHO COULDN'T FIND YOUR SKIRT, FOUND A PAIR OF STOCKINGS INSTEAD?
IT'S VERY SIMPLE YOU LOOKED VERY SEXY IN THEM. THE OUTFIT WAS VERY FETCHING, JUST A PAIR OF STOCKINGS AND A T-SHIRT
MHHH MMHHHH
NOW YOU UNDERSTAND THAT EVEN WHILE YOU WERE TRYING TO BE MODEST AND ESCAPE YOUR ROLE, YOU WERE, ON THE CONTRARY, ACTING ACCORDING TO THE SCRIPT, BY APPEARING NAKED IN ALMOST EVERY VIGNETTE
WELL THEN, WHY DID THE RASTAFARIAN HAVE LOU-LOU'S SKIRT? HE PUT IT ON HER
THE RASTAFARIAN IS THE ONLY UNFORESEEN ELEMENT OF THE SCRIPT! BUT DON'T NURTURE ANY ILLUSIONS HE WON'T COME BACK!

I WOULDN'T BE SO SURE IF I WERE YOU!
STOP! NO MORE TALKING! NOW PUT ON YOUR CLOTHES AND COME WITH US! THEY'RE ALL WAITING FOR US

WHO ARE ALL THOSE PEOPLE DOWN THERE?
SOME VERY IMPORTANT PEOPLE WE WILL GIVE THEM THE BAG WITH THE PLANS AND THEY WILL FURNISH THE CAPITAL FOR THE CONSTRUCTION FOR THE NEW PLANTS

EVERYTHING IS READY FOR THE CEREMONY, MISS

VERY WELL! MR BO, TELL YOUR MEN WHAT TO DO


BERGMAN, NOW IS THE TIME TO GIVE ME THE BAG!
I CAN'T! THESE PLANS CONCERN HUMANITY, AND I

SHUT UP! EITHER I HAVEN'T BEEN AS CLEAR AS I THOUGHT, OR YOU ARE VERY SLOW, BERGMAN. LOOK AROUND

YOU SEE THOSE MEN, BERGMAN?

DO YOU REALLY BELIEVE THAT THEY CARRY VIOLINS IN THOSE VIOLIN CASES?

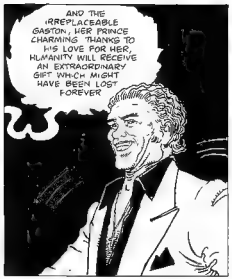
MR BO, YOU MUST ACCOMPANY MR BERGMAN TO PICK UP THE BAG
AND WHAT IF I REFUSED?

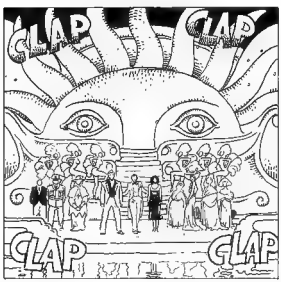
SOON YOU WILL HAVE THAT BAG, LOU-LOU. FOLLOW ME NOW ! WILL INTRODUCE YOU TO THE PERSON YOU WILL HAVE TO GIVE IT TO.
WHAT ? I WILL HAVE TO GIVE IT TO SOMEBODY ?
OF COURSE. REMEMBER THAT YOU ARE A PROSTITUTE WHO SOMEHOW, BY CHANCE, NOW HAS A BAG THAT CONTAINS VERY IMPORTANT PLANS. YOU KNOW NOTHING OF THESE PLANS, AND YOU GIVE THEM TO THE ONLY PERSON WHO HAS SHOWN SOME AFFECTION FOR YOU . IT MAKES SENSE, DOESN'T IT ?
MAKES SENSE ? AND THEN WHAT ? I KNOW VERY WELL WHAT'S IN THAT BAG
STOP ! NO MATTER WHAT YOU THINK, YOU ARE A SILLY SLUT ! AND YOU KNOW NOTHING ABOUT THESE THINGS. YOU WILL GIVE THE BAG TO YOUR LOVER ! YOU ARE LUCKY, HE IS EXTREMELY ATTRACTIVE
MR GASTON !
I WOULD LIKE TO INTRODUCE LOU-LOU !
WHAT ! THAT'S IT ??
YOU KNOW THAT I CAN ONLY TOLERATE BLONDES. YOU MUST EXCHANGE HER !
IMPOSSIBLE, MR GASTON ! MISS JANE COULDN'T TAKE THE PART AND THE SCRIPT WAS MODIFIED
YOU GIVE HER A WIG ? I DON'T KNOW MAYBE SOME PEROXIDE WOULD DO.
I'M AFRAID THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE ALSO. OUR READERS KNOW HER ALREADY. YOU UNDERSTAND IN THE PRECEDING EP SUDE THEY SHAVED HER PUBIS
WON'T HAVE TO SCREW HER, I HOPE !
OH, NOT RIGHT AWAY, MR GASTON ! ONLY ONCE AND AT THE VERY END OF THE STORY A LONG LOVE SCENE VERY ROMANTIC : THE CROWNING GLORY !
FOLLOW ME, PLEASE, MR GASTON THE CEREMONY IS ABOUT TO BEGIN
EVERY-THING IS READY GIVE THE SIGNAL

KROK-KRR-RR-KROK
ZUM★ZUM★PARA★PA★ZUM
ZUM★PA★PAA★ZUM
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! WE ARE HERE TO CELEBRATE THE GREATEST EVENT IN CONTEMPORARY HISTORY! THE EVENT OF THE CENTURY!!
WE HAVE ASKED A FEW PEOPLE WHO HAVE GENEROUSLY CONTRIBUTED TO THIS EVENT TO JOIN US HERE!
MADAM XY!
KLAP KLAP
MADAM SO-AND-SO!
KLAP
KLAP
MADAM THIS ONE!
AND MADAM THE-OTHER!
KLAP KLAP
NOW WE WOULD LIKE TO EXTEND A WARM WELCOME TO THE CELEBRITIES WHOSE WORK AND HELP HAS PERMITTED HUMANITY TO TAKE A STEP FORWARD!
HIS EXCELLENCY SO-AND-SO!
GENERAL THAT-ONE!
HIS EXCELLENCY THE PLENIPOTENTIARY MINISTER!

AND FINALLY, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, THE TWO ACTORS IN THIS FANTASTIC EVENT

LOL-LOU, THE MODEST LIM, MASSEUSE, WHO, BECAUSE OF A STRANGE TWIST OF FATE, NOW HAS THE BAG IN HER POSSESSION


AND THE IRREPLACEABLE GASTON, HER PRINCE CHARMING THANKS TO HIS LOVE FOR HER, HUMANITY WILL RECEIVE AN EXTRAORDINARY GIFT WHICH MIGHT HAVE BEEN LOST FOREVER

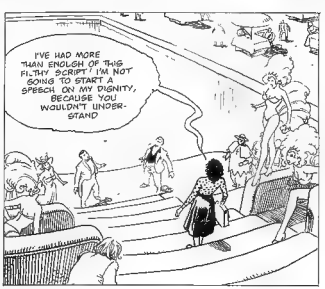

CLAP
CLAP
CLAP
CLAP

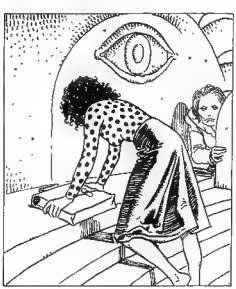
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN ! I FEEL THIS IS A WONDERFULLY TOUCHING MOMENT I HAVE AN ANNOUNCEMENT TO MAKE LOU-LOU WILL PERFORM FOR US, FOR ALL THE PUBLIC, A NOBLE GESTURE, ACCOMPLISHED WITH ALL THE SPONTANEITY OF HER VERY FEMININE NATURE

SHE WILL GIVE HER DEAR GASTON THE BAG, WHICH HOLDS A SECRET FAR TOO BIG FOR HER TO TACKLE !

GO ON ! GIVE HIM THE BAG

I'VE HAD ENOUGH OF THIS RIDICULOUS FARCE !!!


I'VE HAD MORE THAN ENOUGH OF THIS FILTHY SCRIPT ! I'M NOT GOING TO START A SPEECH ON MY DIGNITY, BECAUSE YOU WOULDN'T UNDERSTAND



I'M ONLY GOING TO SAY ONE THING THE ONLY WAY YOU'RE GOING TO GET THIS BAG IS OVER MY DEAD BODY !

WE'RE NOT EVEN GOING TO KILL YOU, YOU LITTLE IDIOT ! ALL WE NEED TO DO IS TAKE YOU OUT OF THE SCRIPT YOUR ROLE IN THIS STORY IS MERELY AN EROTIC ONE IF YOU PERSIST IN THIS ATTITUDE, I'M GOING TO MAKE YOU DISAPPEAR FROM THE STAGE

AND IF YOU WANT TO KEEP ON JABBERING, GO AHEAD AS LONG AS YOU KEEP YOUR LEGS WIDE APART

COME ON, YOU SLUT TELL US ABOUT YOUR DIGNITY! YOU CAN EVEN BADMOUTH THE SCRIPT AS LONG AS YOU LET US SEE WHAT'S UNDER YOUR SKIRT! HA! HA!
AND NOW, YOU LOUSY SON, ARE YOU GOING TO GIVE ME THAT BAG?
AS LONG AS I KEEP MY LEGS APART, I CAN DO WHAT I LIKE FUCK OFF!
THIS IS GOING TOO FAR!!!
LOU-LOU! RUN AWAY!! SAVE YOURSELF!!
BERGMAN! YOUR ROLE HAS ENDED! YOU HAVE NOTHING TO DO HERE NOTHING!!
WHAT DO YOU MEAN BY THAT? JUST WATCH WHAT I'M GOING TO DO TO YOUR STUPID STORY!!
WE'LL SEE IF MY ROLE HAS REALLY ENDED!
WHO'S THAT GUY?
WHAT DOES HE WANT? WHERE'S HE COMING FROM?
RUN FOR YOUR LIFE!!
HE'S GONE MAD!!!
HELP!
HELP!

EUROTRANS
DOWN THERE... LOOK!!
TOUMP
TOUMP
TOUMP

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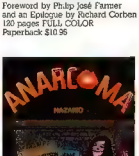

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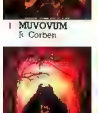

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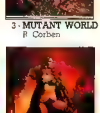

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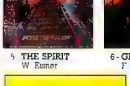

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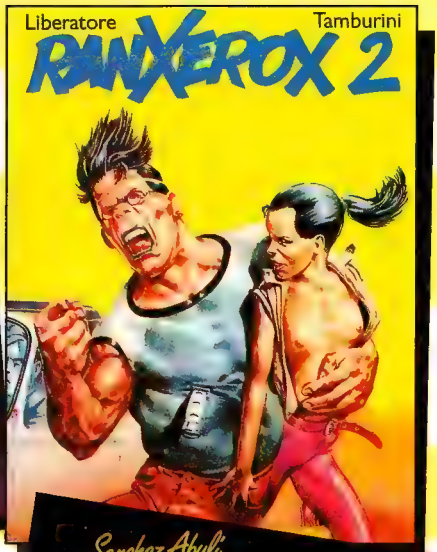

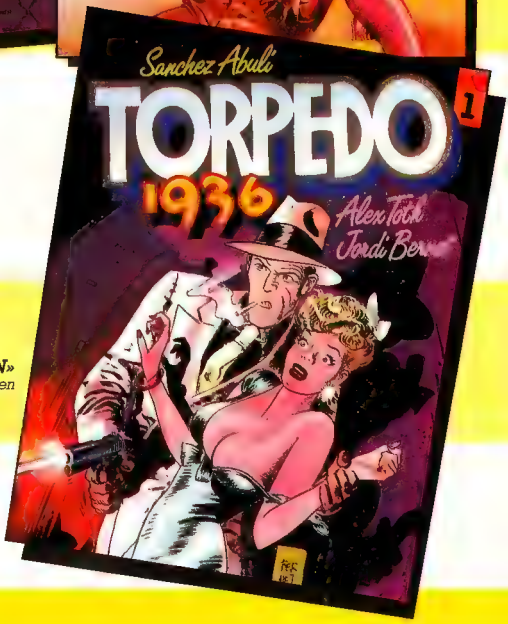

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HUNGHOUL THE SORCERER IS **NOT** IN THE BEST OF MOODS.
YOU LESSER DEMONS THERE! PULL! PULL ON THOSE OARS 'TIL YOUR SPINES BREAK!
LEAVE ME ALONE, WENCH! I'VE GOT ENOUGH PROBLEMS AS IT IS!
I HATE TO TELL YOU, DEAR-BUT I THINK YOU'VE GOT ONE **MORE** PROBLEM.
DESICCATED ZOMBIE!
SLAUGHTERER OF INNOCENTS! :PUFF!: :PANT!:
:PUFF!: :PANT!: FOUL ENCHANTER! :GASP!: HUNGHOUL! GIVE ME BACK MY WIFE! :PUFF!: :PUFF!:

© '78 RICHARD CORBEN & SIMON REVELSTROKE

A DAY AND A NIGHT THEY RODE THE STEAMY AIR CURRENTS ABOVE THE INVISIBLE SEA - THE HUNTER AND THE HUNTED.

NOW PILGOR THE SAVAGE THRUSTER LEANS ANXIOUSLY FORWARD INTO THE STIFF BREEZE AS HE CLOSES WITH HIS QUARRY'S VESSEL.

HUNGHOUL THE SORCERER. HUNGHOUL THE WICKED/ THE DESPOILER OF PILGOR'S LANDS AND THE RAVISHER OF HIS VIRGIN BRIDE, SMEGMELLA. HERE HE IS NOW, HIS DIREST ENEMY - AT LAST BUT A HEARTBEAT AWAY.

BY RICHARD CORBEN AND SIMON REVELSTROKE

PREPARE YOURSELF FOR A LONG STAY IN HELL, SORCERER! MY SWORD SIDESPLITTER THIRSTS FOR YOUR BLOOD/ :PUFF!: :PUFF!:

I THOUGHT THE DRAGON ATE HIM. WHAT WENT WRONG?

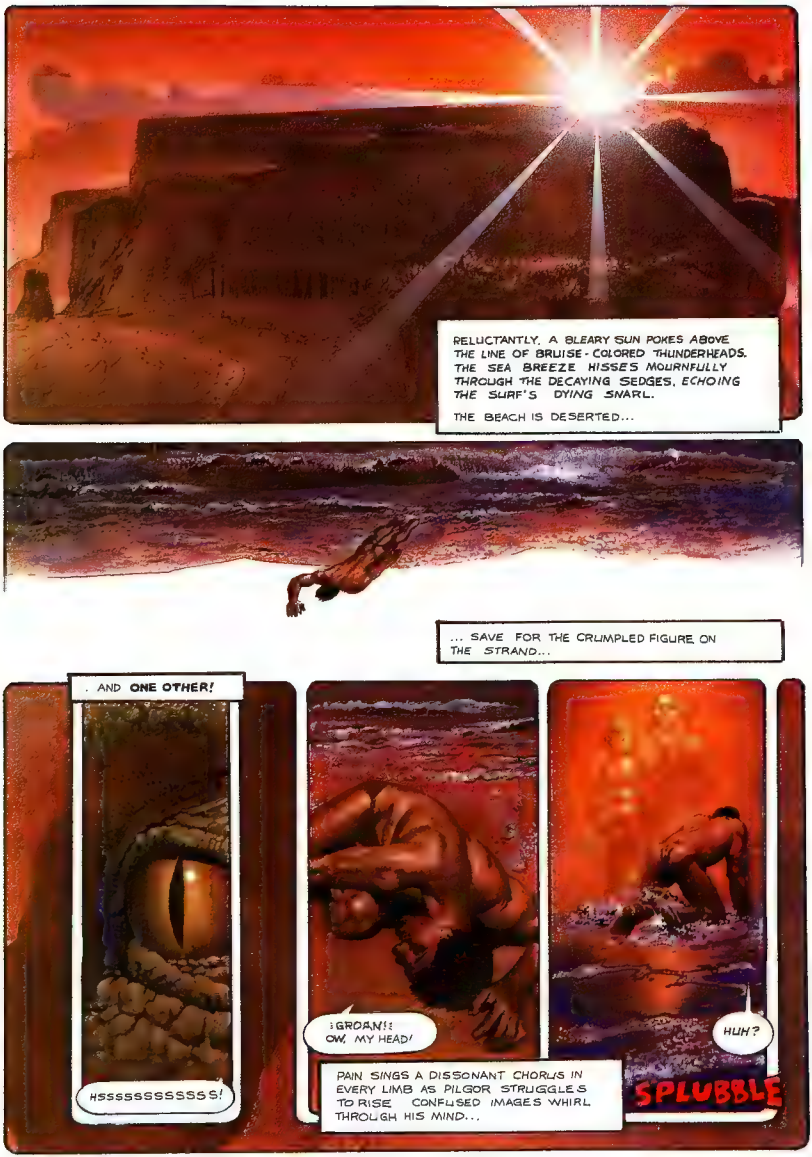
WELL, YOU'D BETTER DO SOMETHING, QUICK! HE'S GOT THAT MEAN LOOK IN HIS EYES.

I AGREE. SHALL WE SEE ABOUT "LIGHTNING" HIS LOAD? HEH! HEH!

SSS-RAK!

:GASP!: MISSED ME! COME, FIRE! DO YOUR WORST! NOTHING CAN STOP ME NOW! COURAGE, SMEGMELLA - I'M COMING...

FOR SMEGMELLAAA


RELUCTANTLY, A BLEARY SUN POKES ABOVE THE LINE OF BRUISE-COLORED THUNDERHEADS. THE SEA BREEZE HISSES MOURNFULLY THROUGH THE DECAYING SEDGES, ECHOING THE SURF'S DYING SNARL.
THE BEACH IS DESERTED...
... SAVE FOR THE CRUMPLED FIGURE ON THE STRAND...
. AND ONE OTHER!
HSSSSSSSSSSS!
¡GROAN!¡
OW, MY HEAD!
PAIN SINGS A DISSONANT CHORUS IN EVERY LIMB AS PILGOR STRUGGLES TO RISE. CONFUSED IMAGES WHIRL THROUGH HIS MIND...
HUH?
SPLUBBLE

SPLOOP!
HI YO! HSSST! UP HERE! HURRY!
UH...
I WOULDN'T WAIT. SSSSHE'SSS NOT TOO HAPPY WITH YOU.
THOSSSE PUDENDA ARE A NASSSTY LOT THISSS TIME OF THE MONTH. VERY IRRITABLE DURING THEIR MATING TIME. ANY BED MATE'LL DO.
BEDMATE?
EEEEEEEEERRRRG
REND DESTROY
GROWRRL
SNORT!
WE'D BETTER JUMP FOR IT!
CRACK
KROK
SNAP
POP!
EEEEEEEE
CRUNCH!
LATER, AS DUSK BEGINS TO FALL...
NISSSE SSSWORD YOU'VE GOT THERE.
YES. NOT A MAGIC BLADE, BUT A LITTLE OIL AND WHET STONING WILL MAKE IT QUITE SERVICEABLE. I'LL CALL IT -UH- SIDE SPLITTER II.
WASSS THERE ONE BEFORE IT?
I - I DON'T KNOW. I CAN'T REMEMBER - ANYTHING, EXCEPT A FACE. NO, TWO FACES - ONE, SMILING AND SWEET, THE OTHER TWISTED AND EVIL.
LOSSST YOUR MIND, EH? WELL, THERE ARE WORSSSE THINGSSS - TAKE THESE POPPERSSSS, FOR INSSTANSSSSE. TOO BAD. BUT LET ME TELL YOU ABOUT MY MISSSFORTUNE, MY SSAD QUESST FOR AMMORA...

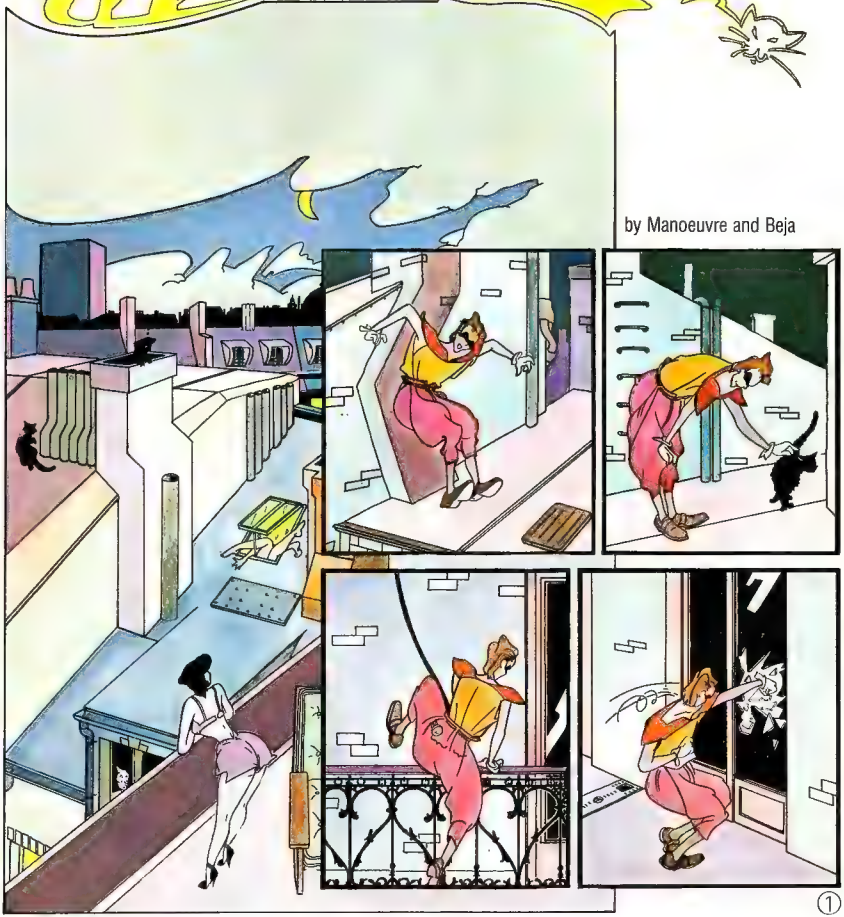
UH, MORE O' WHAT?
SSSSNIFF! AMMORA AND I WERE SSSO HAPPY. SSSSHE WASSSS THE PERFECT SSSLAVE, THE PERFECT LOVE-MATE. WHY, SSSSHE EVEN USSSED TO GREASSSE HER BODY SSSSO MY SSSSCALESSSS WOULDN'T CHAFE HER PINK SSSSKIN.
AYE! LONG-LEGGED AMMORA. A TRUE DAUGHTER OF THE PERFUMED NIGHT! HER JUDDERING BREASSSTSSS WERE LIKE RUBY-CROWNED TEMPLE DOMESSS SSSHAKEN DURING AN EARTHQUAKE...
...AND WHEN SSSHE DANSSSED...
WOW!
I NEED A SSTRONG SSSSSWORD ARM, FELLOW PILGRIM. WILL YOU WALK WITH ME AND HELP ME FIND MY LOSSSST FAIR ONE?
GRUNT
SURE... WHY NOT?
AND SO-
THE BODYSSEY BEGINS.

AHHHHH!
♫UMMM WARM MALE SWEET MEAT♪
NOW WAIT JUST A...
♫SMOOTH SQUEEZE♪ SLICK MATE♫
THUMPSH!
AAAGH! :COUGH!: :SPLUTTER!:
PLUNGE DEEP ♫SOUL LOVE♪
BLURBLE!

METHINK·SSS THE TIME ISSSS COME FOR POOR YTGNA TO MAKE A MOVE. HE NEEDSSS MY HELP-
JSSST ASSS I NEED HSSSS!
JOIN EAT SWEET MEAT YUM !
LET GO! UNHAND ME !
AH! OBVIOUSLY A MAGIC SWORD! IF ONLY I CAN REACH IT...
RUSTED TIGHT! OH WELL, RIGHT NOW EVEN A NON-MAGICAL SWORD 'LL DO !
THAP! WHAP WHUD!
THUD WHAK THWOCK
REJECTION? PAIN FORGET IT JUST EAT!

Le Chat

by Manoeuvre and Beja



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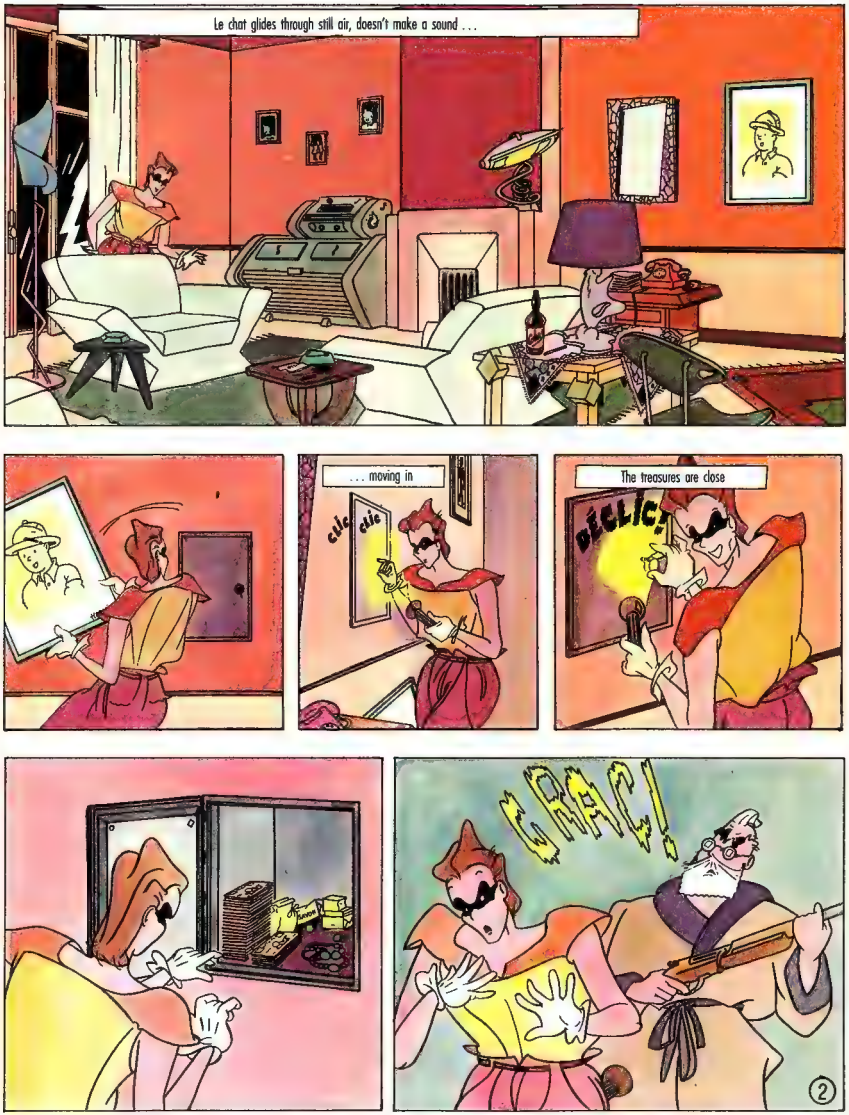
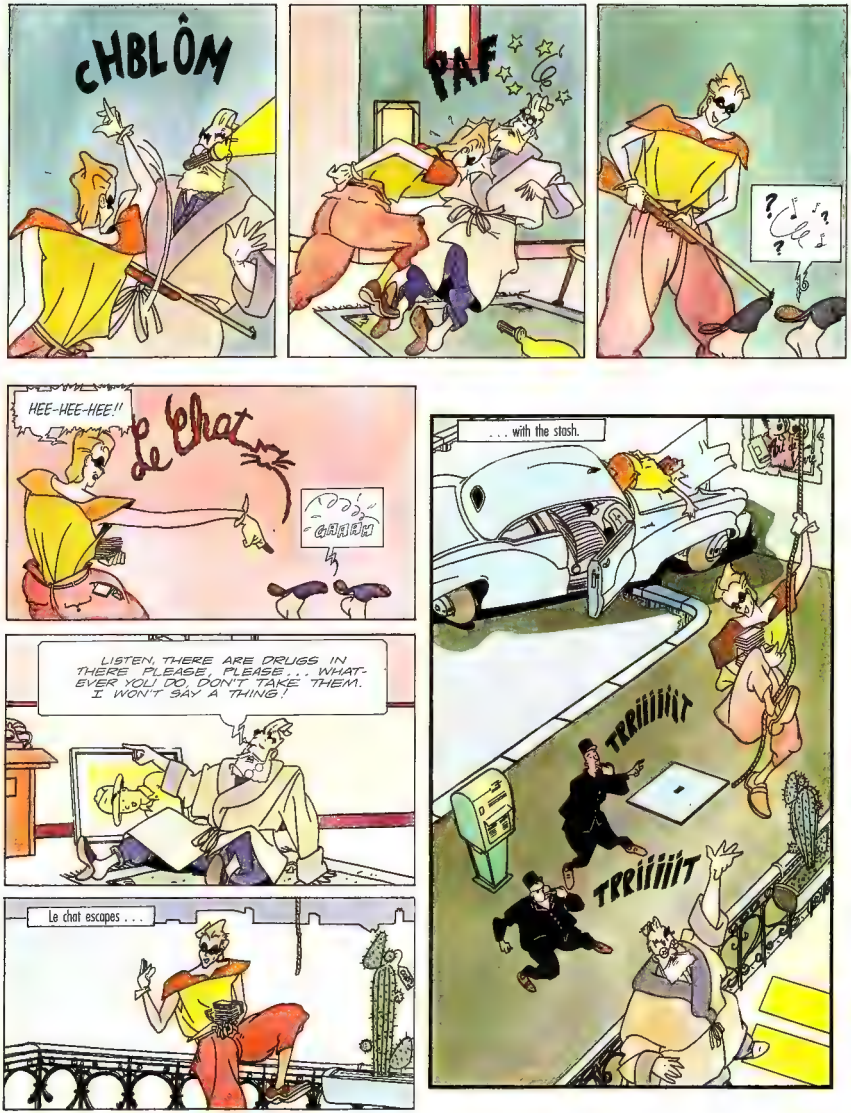
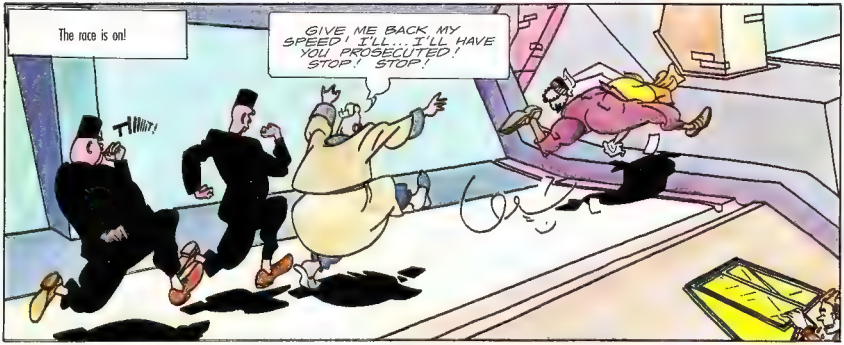

Le chat glides through still air, doesn't make a sound . . .
. . . moving in
clic clic
The treasures are close
DÉCLIC!
CRAC!
2


CHBLÔM
PAF
?
HEE-HEE-HEE!!
Le Chat
GRRR!
LISTEN, THERE ARE DRUGS IN THERE. PLEASE, PLEASE... WHATEVER YOU DO, DON'T TAKE THEM. I WON'T SAY A THING!
Le chat escapes . . .
. . . with the stash.
TRRIIIIIT
TRRIIIIIT

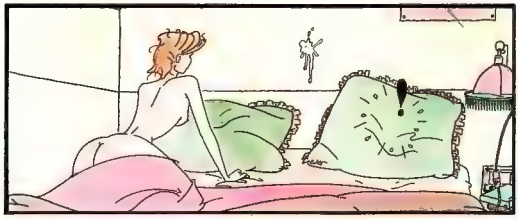

The race is on!
GIVE ME BACK MY SPEED! I'LL... I'LL HAVE YOU PROSECUTED! STOP! STOP!
T'IIIIIT!

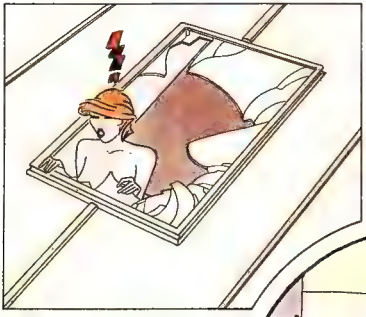
Shots ring out in the lavender sky. . . .
BUVEZ DU
SEX
PICALLE
PAN
POUF

?!
GLANG

4

PFFFFFFFFF!
PFFFFFFFF!
PFFFFFFF!
PFF!
PFFFFFFFFF!
5.

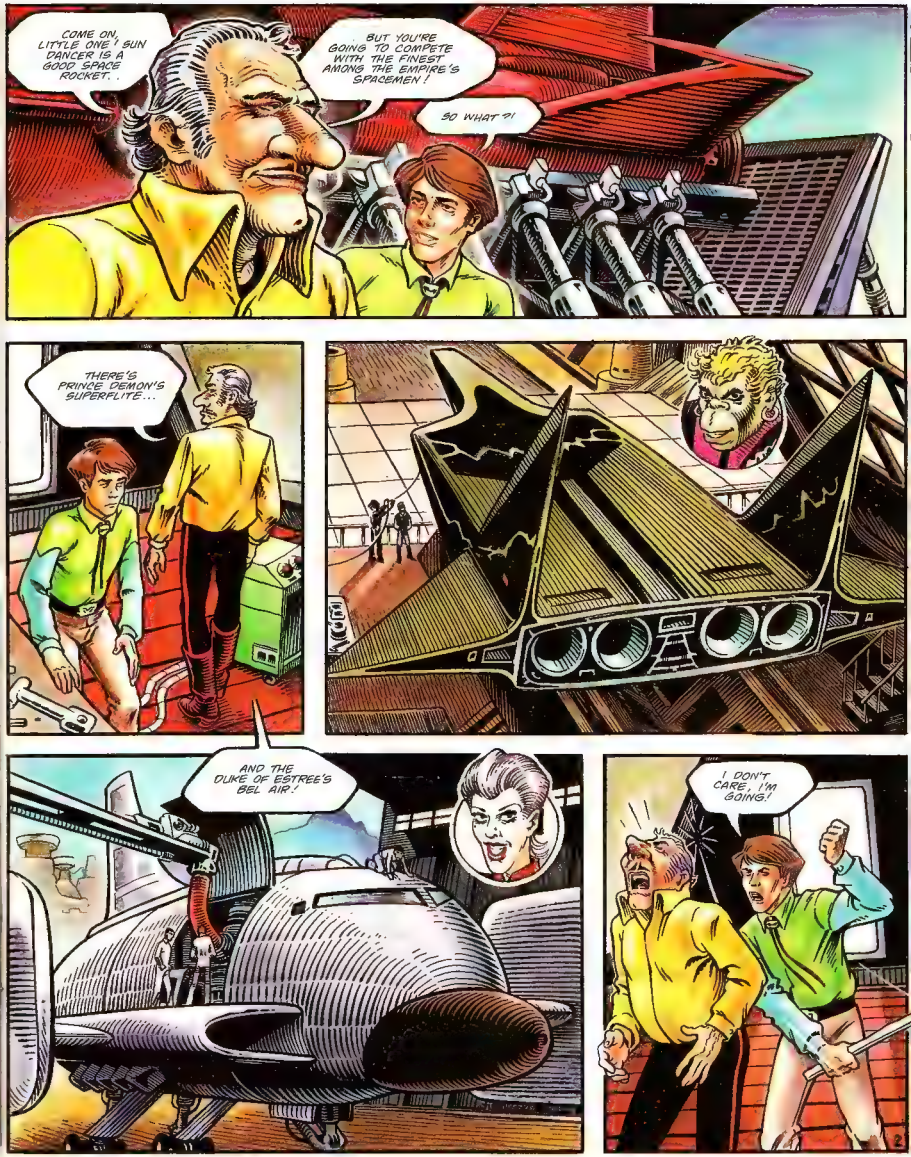




Well this is the End ...

* THANKS FOR LAST NIGHT: I TOOK YOUR CAT.

SUPERFLITE
LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, LIVE FROM DENEB ..
HERE IS WALTER CONCRETE FOR TRANS-GALACTIC LIVE FROM DENEB, WHERE PRE-PARATIONS ARE BEING MADE FOR THE WEDDING CELEBRATION OF THE PRINCESS KAROLYN !
TV G3
STORY by PHIL MANOEUVRE
ART by AL VOSS
ZZZZZ.
KNIT ONE, PURL ONE ..
THE PRINCESS DOES NOT KNOW WHO HER HER HUSBAND WILL BE
IT WILL BE THE WINNER OF THE SEVEN-PLANET RALLY, THE INTERGALACTIC RACE....
ERROL PLEASE LET ME GO !

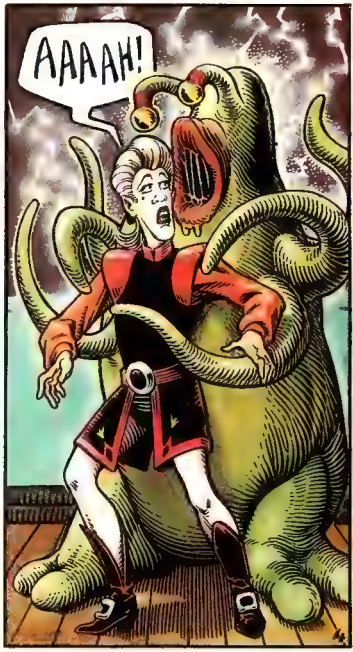

COME ON, LITTLE ONE! SUN DANCER IS A GOOD SPACE ROCKET..
BUT YOU'RE GOING TO COMPETE WITH THE FINEST AMONG THE EMPIRE'S SPACEMEN!
SO WHAT?!
THERE'S PRINCE DEMON'S SUPERPLITE...
AND THE DUKE OF ESTREE'S BEL AIR!
I DON'T CARE. I'M GOING!

SO ON THE THIRD LEVEL OF THE FESTIVAL OF ISIS, THE SPACESHIPS STARTED ON THE SEVEN-PLANET COURSE.
AND ON THE BEL AIR...
OKAY....
WE'VE LEFT THEM BEHIND.
BUT!...

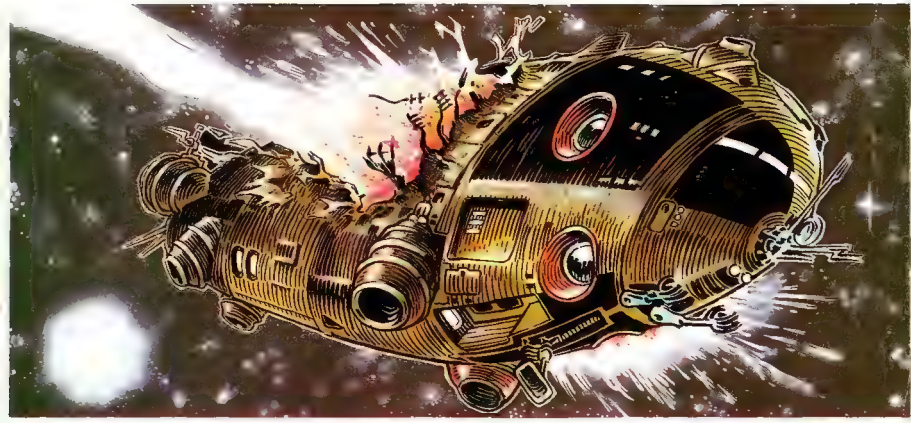
WAIT A MINUTE!
HYPER SPEED
DANG

HA! HA! HA!

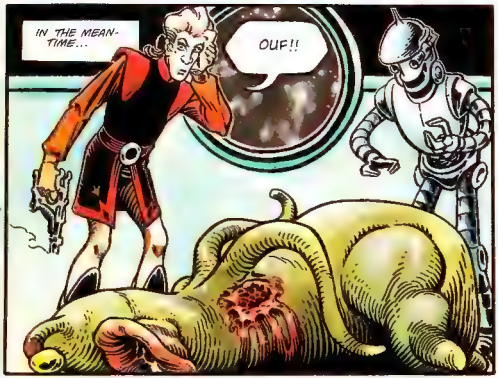
THIS MAGIC POTION WILL NO DOUBT AMUSE THAT DEAR DESTREE. GO, NIGHT-MARE!


AAAAH!

SUN DANCER IS APPROACHING THE SECOND PLANET... AND ALL OF A SUDDEN FINDS ITSELF IN A NOVA !
SHIIIIT!!
URGENCY
WE'RE RIPPING INTO HYPERSPACE !
GOD ONLY KNOWS WHERE WE'RE GOING TO... AAHH ! PRINCESS !!!



..A DESPERATE MANEUVER...
...SUN DANCER HAS JUST EXPLODED! IT COLLIDED WITH A ROVING METEORITE AT A HUNDRED MEGASECONDS..


IN THE MEAN-TIME...
OUF!!

I'M GOING TO HIDE BEHIND THIS ASTEROID .
JUST YOU WAIT, YOU BASTARD!!
6

HA! HA! MY GIFT DESTROYED THAT FAGGOT OF A DUKE... AHHGH!
THEY'RE FIGHTING, AND THAT'S AGAINST THE RULES OF INTERGALACTIC SPORTS. WILL THE EMPEROR INTERFERE?
HA! HA! THE DEMON IS RUNNING AWAY!
AND HE'S GOING RIGHT INTO...

A BLACK HOLE!!
AAAHHH!!!
BY ISHTAR!
HA! HA! THE PRINCESS IS MINE!
THERE HE IS!
YEAH!!
VIVA!
HOORAY!
BRAVO!
DUKE, WE WILL OVERLOOK A SLIGHT, ER, IRREGULARITY IN YOUR COURSE. YOU ARE THE WINNER: MY DAUGHTER IS YOURS.

YES! COME!
AAAAHH!
THAT SAME NIGHT, AT THE PALACE...
?!
LATER, AT THE ASTROPORT
THE BEL AIR IS TAKING OFF!
NOBODY EVER KNEW WHAT HAPPENED TO OLD ERROL... HE WAS VERY OLD AND THE BEL AIR WAS VERY FAST AS FOR THE EMPEROR, HE HAD OTHER DAUGHTERS, MANY OTHER DAUGHTERS HE COULD WHIP INTO SUBMISSION....
FIN

Dossier

Scream Gems: Director Larry Cohen

A flying serpent makes its nest in Manhattan's Chrysler Building and snatches topless sunbathers from rooftop terraces. A monstrous baby, mutated by toxic wastes, kills a milkman in its quest for food. A Christ-like alien reveals his hermaphroditism and offers to mate with his earthling half-brother. A yogurt-like substance called "The Stuff" ("You like it. It likes you") begins to devour American consumers.

Are these the reveries of a cultural burnout? Well, maybe. But they're also scenes from **Larry Cohen** movies. The flying serpent is the eponymous star of *Q* (1982); the monstrous baby is from ***It's Alive*** (1974) and its sequel, ***It Lives Again*** (1978), the alien bisexual from the 1977 sf shocker, ***Demon*** (a.k.a. ***God Told Me To***); and the carnivorous fast food is from Cohen's latest, ***The Stuff***.

Cohen's whacked-out takes on American culture have earned him critical analysis in *Film Journal*, *Sight and Sound*, and *Film Comment*, as well as tributes at the Museum of Modern Art and New York's Public Theater. Yet Cohen himself remains an industry outcast. Not unlike the court-martialed hero in the Cohen-created series, "Branded," Larry Cohen's got a bad reputation, a reputation that makes it necessary for him to find financing for his films on his own.

But Cohen's self-promotion continues unabated. Currently wrapping *The Stuff*, Cohen has two other films ready for release: ***Blind Alley***, a crime melodrama featuring *Liquid Sky* star Anne Carlisle, and ***Special Effects***, starring *Ms. 45* herself, Zoe Tamerlis. In addition, he's just completed a script based on Marvel Comics' ***Dr. Strange.***

—James Verniere

HM: You've made three films in a row, all of them unreleased. Why is that? How do you keep up the pace?

LC: Well, I made them back to back, and they will all be released. I find that I've got more energy now than I had ten years ago. Don't ask me why.

HM: You've said that *The Stuff* is on one level a satire about consumerism.

LC: Oh, it is, definitely. It's a humorous commentary on fast food, the contamination of the food chain, and on saturation advertising.

HM: Many ads for booze, smoking, and food in effect promote death.

LC: Exactly. So many things that we buy because we think they're sexy are really just bad for our health. "Live dangerously." "Buy The Stuff." Even though it'll eat you. There are people who will say that *The Stuff* is really about cocaine, and—who knows?—it might be. It's about everything that makes you lose control.

HM: Some people have suggested that your films are like fast food, designed to be quickly consumed and rapidly replaced.

LC: I think if that's true it's because my movies are not Establishment pictures. If *Q* had been an Establishment film, Michael Moriarty would have received an Oscar nomination. He was that good in it. But it wasn't an Establishment film, so it was ignored, even though critics like Siskel and Ebert loved it.

HM: Well, it has had a second life on the midnight circuit.

LC: But I don't expect it to do well because those films are generally only successful if they have some kind of kinky sex. *Rocky Horror* and *Liquid Sky* are hits. Transvestism is somehow the key. Really, there's always somebody like Divine in drag. If Moriarty had put on a dress, *Q* would have had a chance. The point is to blow some grass to loosen up your sexual identity and go to a midnight show. *Q* doesn't work on that level.

HM: What kind of films interest you?

LC: The films made years ago for no money that are now being remade for millions. *Cat People*, *The Thing*, *Invasion of the Body Snatchers*. In every case, the expensive remake was not as good as the original black-and-white film.

HM: Why is that?

LC: Because in each case the story got overwhelmed by the effects. The original films also had something extra: a sexual or political subtext.

HM: Some suggest that that subtext is what makes films like *It's Alive* cult hits.

LC: A lot of people thought it was just another exploitation film. But I think it was like *The Elephant Man*. It was a tragic and upsetting film that dealt with everything from the ethics of destroying deformed children to the poisoning of the environment. Andrew Sarris [of the *Village Voice*] just saw the film on cable and he told me that he would never have seen it in a theater but that it was wonderful. He asked me why he didn't get to write about my movies. Why is he asking me? It's true, though, that cable tv has done a lot for me and my films.

HM: But you still have to raise money on your own.

LC: It's funny. Steven Spielberg loved *It's Alive*, but he would never hire me to make a picture. People think I prefer to work on my own. But I've never had the opportunity to say no. I think that I'd like to have $16 million to make a picture.

HM: Some people say you have a bad reputation, and I know that you were fired from the set of *I, the Jury*.

LC: That picture was made by a company

It's Alive, *but not for long.*

Larry Cohen

that was close to bankruptcy. So it was mainly a financial problem. I couldn't stand the constant money problems. We were six weeks into shooting and I still hadn't been paid for my screenplay, so I told them I was going to close down the picture. Well, they paid me for the script and fired me. I made *Q*. They made their movie. We were both happy. Besides, I did manage to revive Mike Hammer.

HM: You've started a few trends. One of your first series was "The Invaders." Where did you get the idea for that?

LC: I had written something called *The Invisibles* when I was eleven or twelve. It was about invisible aliens who lived all around us. I just changed them to aliens who looked just like us.

HM: It was a paranoid idea.

LC: Well, again, it had that political subtext. A kind of "Who can you trust?" theme. Before that I did "Branded" with Chuck Connors, which was about a guy court-martialed for cowardice who tries to prove he's innocent. Actually, that series was about the blacklist. It was about a person who suffers the destruction of his reputation and is forced to wander without a name. I remember telling Chuck Connors what the show was really about. I didn't know what his politics were at the time, but I found out. Less than a week later, I was removed from the show. Connors even tried to run me down on his horse. I swear.

HM: How did your writing career get started? You started to work as soon as you graduated from CCNY.

LC: I wrote an episode for "The Defenders."

HM: How? You were fresh out of school.

LC: I just sent them stories until they bought one. The first one they bought was about a guy on his way to the death house to be executed for a murder he didn't commit. He gets away but kills a detective in the escape. Then while he's at large it's discovered that he was innocent of the original charge. So E. G. Marshall defends him, claiming he had a right to escape because the state was trying unjustly to murder him. It was called "Kill or Be Killed."

HM: Your first successful feature films were *Black Caesar* and *Hell Up in Harlem*. Why did you make them?

LC: Well, I thought there was an audience there that hadn't been explored. And there was only supposed to be one film. But

"There are people who will say that *The Stuff* is really about cocaine."

Black Caesar was so successful that they called me to do a sequel three days after it was released. The problem was that we didn't have a script. "Who needs a script?" I said. So we made it up as we went along, and unfortunately it looked it.

HM: But were you consciously making black exploitation films?

LC: Not with *Black Caesar*. It was intended to be a black version of *Little Caesar*, and it was the antithesis of black exploitation films. Usually in those films the black guy wins, gets the girl (who's usually white), and lives happily ever after. In *Black Caesar* Fred Williamson ends up in the slums at the end. In fact, in our original ending he's killed by some teenagers who think he's a bum. But we took it out at the last minute. I can remember going to all the theaters in New York and cutting the last five minutes out of the film in the projection room.

HM: You went from black films to horror and science-fiction films. But on the way you made *The Private Files of J. Edgar Hoover*, a very political film. Why?

LC: I just wanted to be defiant. Everyone said I wouldn't be able to make it. That I would never be allowed to shoot in Washington. Well, fate was on my side. The day after we arrived, Betty Ford found out that Broderick Crawford and Dan Dailey were in town. So she invited them to the White House to have lunch with her and President Ford. So I had this great idea and I called the FBI. I said, "We really want to shoot in your building today. But we can't because the stars are having lunch with the president. Can we shoot there tomorrow?" They put me on hold for about five minutes. When they came back, they said, "What time would you like to shoot?" After we got into the FBI building everything else was a snap.

HM: Who are Larry Cohen's hard-core fans?

LC: I don't know anymore. The moviegoing public has diminished. Most people don't even go to the movies anymore. They just watch television. Movies have become something people see on television. Or television on a big screen.

HM: How does that affect the way Larry Cohen makes a movie?

LC: Not at all. I just do things the same way I used to. I don't make any concessions. I just do the goddamn picture, that's all ■

Comic Erotic:

JUST JAECKIN

Just Jaeckin's first film was ***Emmanuelle*** (1974), judged by many to be the first erotic film for couples. Although he's never considered himself to be a director of erotica, Jaeckin was stereotyped as such when films like ***Story of O*** (1975) and ***Madame Claude*** (1978) came his way. His two mainstream pictures, ***The Last Romantic Lover*** (1978) and ***Girls*** (1979), received little attention from the general public. Now, after several years' absence from motion pictures, Jaeckin has returned with ***The Perils of Gwendoline***, an adventure film based on John Willie's 1930s bondage cartoon strip.

What is this "master of erotica" like? Certainly he doesn't fit the image of a greasy, cigar-chewing purveyor of young female flesh. Instead, he is charming, chatty, and polite. On a recent stay in Los Angeles to direct TV ads for 7-Up, Jaeckin graciously granted an early-morning, pre-dental-appointment interview. The director appeared in well-worn leather pants and a blue shirt and sweater. His salt-and-pepper hair was cropped short, and, all in all, he looked very athletic and Californian. His rather strong French accent, however, was a dead giveaway that Malibu was not his home. (We spoke in a mix of French and English.) He shifted in his chair constantly, waving his hands and staring at the interviewer as if to make sure he was getting through.

My overall impression of Jaeckin is that of a man who loves his work and deeply hopes that others will love it as well.

—R.J.M. Lofficier

HM: You started out as a freelance photographer and later turned to making films and TV commercials. What made you want to become a movie director?

Just Jaeckin: Actually, let me rephrase that question. I never tried to become anything in my life. Everything has always come to me naturally. I mean, when I changed jobs, it always seemed the natural thing to do. I was a student at the Arts Deco School in Paris when I was fifteen. At eighteen, I was hired by *Marie-Claire*, a popular fashion magazine, to be their art director. Then I did military service in Algeria. When I came back, around 1962, I went back to being art director for *Marie-Claire* for a while. Then I dropped everything to become a freelance photographer. Between 1964 and 1970, I became a big name in photography in Europe. I did stuff for *Vogue, Elle, Harper's Bazaar,* all the big fashion magazines. Then I got lucky and made some short films for a French TV show called "Dim, Dam, Dom." And from there I went into commercials.

HM: Did you learn how to direct film at the Arts Deco?

JJ: Actually, I was into sculpture: it was very difficult to break into movies then. It was like Hollywood, an extremely closed world. But around 1970 they started to open some doors to kids like me who came from commercials or television. So one day somebody asked me to make a feature film. And I almost didn't believe him because it was such an enormous dream. So big! Of course I said yes at once. And that's how I ended up doing *Emmanuelle*.

HM: Had you read the book before? It had been banned. It could only be sold under the counter—which made it very popular, of course.

JJ: No! At the time, I didn't even know what it was all about. When I read the book, I became all white and red! I said to myself, "How am I going to make a film that's so erotic?" Also, at the time, there was a lot of competition in pornography from America. *Deep Throat* had just come out. I told myself, "I can't make that kind of film. What can I make?" I started from the idea that, to make something with eroticism and sensuality, it was better not to show anything. The audience must project their own fantasies onto the screen. It's the same for horror films. The less you show and the more you leave to the imagination, the more successful your film is going to be. And *Emmanuelle* was very successful—because I showed practically nothing. After the film was completed, my producer was in a state of panic. He thought I was going to cause his ruin because I had refused to show anything.

Unfortunately, because of *Emmanuelle* I had a big problem. Its success became *too* big. Do you know that *Emmanuelle* is the most successful French film of all time? So I had a lot of difficulty getting away from this enormously successful erotic film. I did *Story of O*, with Corinne Clery, and then I did *Madame Claude*, which I think was called *The French Madame* in the U.S.

So one day I said, "That's enough! I don't want to do erotic films anymore." So

Gwendoline before . . .

I made a film called *The Last Romantic Lover*. I put a lot of my own money in it. But the film was very poorly received in France. People didn't understand. My public came to see an erotic film and they saw something very different, very tender, so they were disappointed. Fortunately, the film was very successful in Canada. It was sold to HBO here, and it was a very big success all over the world—except in France, in my own country!

After that, I was "punished," if you will, for two years. For instance, I made a film for kids called *Girls*, and it was banned to the under-thirteens just because of its title and because my name was on it. After that, I made *Lady Chatterley's Lover*, again with Sylvia Kristel. And then, and only then, I made the film that I had really been wanting to make, and that was *Gwendoline*.

HM: What attracted you so much to *Gwendoline*?

JJ: You see, I'm not at all like people imagine me to be. People believe I'm a fat man with a beard who likes to chase young girls down dark corridors. But in reality, I love the outdoors and sports. I love life. I love laughter. I've been called Just Jokin'! I do a lot of motor racing. I love to play tennis. In many respects, I'm an adventurous person. So my dream was to make an adventure film, with a lot of humor and craziness. And then, of course, you must realize that my forte is still portraying women. I'm not at all attracted by men. So *Gwendoline* was the ideal story for me: an adventure film which stars a beautiful woman heroine.

HM: Yes, but it's still considered erotica. You were complaining about being typecast as a director of erotic films, so doesn't that bother you?

JJ: I suppose. But if you make movies, you must learn to sell them. When I started on *Gwendoline*, I had to tell the distributors that it would be an adventure, but that it would also have a lot of beautiful girls in it, and many sensual scenes. In any event, nobody knows the "Gwendoline" comics today, except for some fans or cult collectors. So I feel pretty safe from that standpoint. Besides, the erotic content of John Willie's comics is very, very tame. It's like the children's books by the Comtesse de Ségur that we read when we were kids. It's nothing, really.

HM: The "Gwendoline" comics are almost entirely based on bondage. How do you work around that?

JJ: Ah, the bondage aspect is something that we almost completely discarded from the beginning, because to us it's a fantasy that appeals only to a very limited public. I don't think I could ever explain the appeal of bondage.

HM: If you discard the bondage aspects, there isn't much left of the comics. So why choose this material at all?

JJ: The great strength of comics is that they have the power to make you dream. When he did *Raiders of the Lost Ark*, Spielberg was doing comics. It's pure comics. Comics are a medium where you don't have to worry about the plausibility of stories. They don't have to be Cartesian, logical.

"Comics are a medium where you don't have to worry about the plausibility of stories. They don't have to be logical."

HM: I'd take exception to that. There are a lot of comics with strong plots, very cohesive ones.

JJ: Okay, when I say that, I don't mean the whole genre of comics. There are always exceptions. But the great advantage of doing a comics-inspired film is that it gives you more freedom. If you're making a detective story, for instance, you have to be absolutely strict in every detail. You can't ignore reality. If I have you dressed in a black sweater, and then later you wear a red sweater, people will ask, "Why has she changed sweaters? When did she have time to do that?" In a comics story, you don't even bother explaining it. People just accept that kind of thing.

HM: You mentioned *Raiders* before. I noticed that *Gwendoline* also takes place in the same time period, the late thirties, early forties. Is that because that's when the comics were done, or is it because, like Spielberg, you feel that this is an age when that kind of adventure is more credible?

JJ: Both. But now that you mention it, it's funny, because I seem to have followed the same reasoning as Spielberg. In *Gwendoline*, we have a Forbidden City located in the middle of a Chinese desert. Today, with the surveillance satellites and all the modern technology, things like that are impossible to accept. If I told you there's a Forbidden City in the middle of the Colorado Valley, you would laugh at me. But in the 1930s there were still unexplored parts of the globe. Things weren't clear-cut, well defined, and perfect as they are today. And that's why *Gwendoline* had to take place in the same time period as *Raiders*. It's not at all because we wanted to copy Spielberg, mind you, but we just followed the same logic.

HM: There were things you liked, and things you disliked, in John Willie's comics. How did you sort it out and arrive at your own version of it?

JJ: I have to come back to what I was saying before about the lack of story. When we looked at "Gwendoline," we realized that the strip had really aged rather badly. In fact, there isn't a single "Gwendoline" strip, as there is, say, a "Tintin" strip. What is there is a succession of three-, four-, or five-page vignettes. A story starts and then stops. Then there are five or six beautiful pages of artwork, but no story. It's like a collection of ideas, magnificently

. . . and after.

***Jaeckin off with* Emmanuelle . . .**

illustrated, but without any logic. "Gwendoline" is like a draft for a comics that didn't get made. Willie did gorgeous paintings, completely unrelated to the stories. Jean-Luc Voulfow, with whom I had worked before on *Girls*, and I built our own story, deriving our inspiration from those drawings. But it's a completely original story. We had to invent one.

First, it's a love story about two people who refuse to love each other—Willard, who is an adventurer, and Gwendoline, who is a bit shrewish. A sort of Romeo and Juliet, if you will. In the comics, you never see Gwendoline's father. So we gave her one. That gave us the idea of sending Gwendoline looking for her father, who disappeared while on a quest for a butterfly at the other end of the world.

HM: Was it your idea to introduce a certain tongue-in-cheek type of humor in the story?

JJ: Definitely! It corresponds to my vision of life—droll, tender, and naive. Then, too, I'm cynical, because I'm forty-four years old and I realize that I pay a lot for my naïveté. Anyway, humor is the only thing in a story that makes everything believable. It's indispensable. What I like about American films is the fact that when the audience is ready to cry, there's always a note of humor to cheer them up. I love it! I'm terribly influenced by American pictures, you know.

HM: Let me ask you something. *Gwendoline* is not funny enough to be dubbed a comedy. It's not erotic enough to appeal to an adult-movies type of audience. Yet it's different from the standard adventure fare. What kind of audience are you trying to reach?

JJ: I'll give you the same answer that they used to print on the cover of *Tintin Magazine* every week: the children from seven to seventy-seven years of age. The same public as Spielberg, really. You know, every time I read one of his interviews, I'm struck by the fact that we think very much alike. In fact, I wrote a script very much like *Indiana Jones and the Temple of Doom*. It had a young hero, a little Chinese kid, etc. I had no luck with it, but Spielberg is more famous and has more money than I do.

HM: You didn't encounter any rating problem, with all the scantily clad women in the film?

JJ: No, not at all! There really is no total nudity. There are a lot of leather costumes, but it looks more like fantasy than S & M. I think the tone of the film is very important and makes all the difference.

HM: You know that a lot of people think of you as the erotic filmmaker par excellence—the man who also directed *Emmanuelle II*, *Emmanuelle III*, and *Emmanuelle IV*. How do you react to this?

JJ: It's terrible. You know, there was no *Emmanuelle II* as a book. They did it purely because of the money. When they made the film, I thought at the time that it'd free me from this association, but on the contrary, the public now believes I've done all these sequels. I've always refused to do sequels. They offered me *Story of O II*, and *Madame Claude II*, but I always refused. The only sequel I might do would be *Gwendoline II*, because that's a story which I truly feel. It's *me*. It amuses me, it means something to me. ■

"After Emmanuelle was completed, my producer was in a state of panic. He thought I was going to cause his ruin because I had refused to show anything."

. . . *and* Story of O.

BEYOND THE VALLEY OF THE VIDEOS

The Last Starfighter (1984); MCA; Directed by Nick Castle.

The Last Starfighter has a real preteen cartoon quality, but that shouldn't stop even gremlins like me who hissed through *E.T.* from enjoying it. Like *Tron*, it's a video-game-come-to-life flick in which Lance Guest (an ambitious teenager stuck plunging toilets in a trailer park) accidentally becomes embroiled in interplanetary intrigue by winning a video game. As an unwanted prize, Guest has to lead an outer space armada, coached by Robert Preston, who plays a kind of intergalactic Music Man. Preston is as likably hammy as ever, Guest exudes a fraternal sweetness reminiscent of Paul LeMat or Matthew Broderick, and the whole shebang manages to charm even at its cutesiest.

Dreamscape (1984); Thorn-EMI; Directed by Joseph Ruben.

Dreamscape has little of the eerie allure of actual dreams, but it does have some ideas worth waking up for. Dennis Quaid plays his usual good-old-boy-on-the-make, only this time he's a wiz in parapsychology who gets involved in a dream research program that allows him to enter other people's nightmares. Complications arise when the CIA decides to use this project for its own creepy purposes, including the manipulation of the president. (Lately the prez has been plagued by nuclear holocaust guilt dreams, which have made him favor total disarmament.) The CIA guys prefer Reagan's "peace through strength" line, and while it's neat that the film posits this policy as bad news, it would have been ballsier to make the movie's *president* the heavy rather than the typical CIA fall guys. Also, the movie doesn't *move* very well. Maurice Jarre's music is grade-Z Euro-horror, Craig Reardon's big nightmare snake looks like an enraged Gumby, and the dream sequences are snoozeable. Still, the script does have its wit, and it's always nice to see some anti-nuke hype coming from an unexpected place.

The Long Riders (1980); MGM/UA; Directed by Walter Hill.

The Long Riders offers the ultimate in ensemble acting—four brother teams (the Carradines, the Keaches, the Quaids, and the Guests) playing outlaw families of the 1860s, united as the James Gang. The brothers' physical resemblances and undeniable familial rapport create a natural chemistry on-screen, aided by Ric Waite's gorgeous cinematography, Ry Cooder's spirited American traditional folk music, and Walter Hill's elegant direction (with acknowledgments to Peckinpah's *The Wild Bunch*). Hill's best movies have always offered us takes on the macho ethic—through the animated graffiti art of *The Warriors*, the swampland mystery of *Southern Comfort*, and the brutal wit of *48 HRS. The Long Riders*, though, is his most stylish and somber movie, truly the best Western since Clint Eastwood's 1976 *The Outlaw Josey Wales*.

Burnt Offerings (1976); MGM/UA; Directed by Dan Curtis.

Brought to you by director-producer Dan Curtis (the same weirdo who gave the world that classic piece of sixties kitsch, "Dark Shadows"), this movie has its own moments of kitsch and some legit chills as well. On the silly side we've got Karen Black, my favorite cross-eyed actress, and Burgess Meredith as an effeminate old coot. Most of the movie is your basic haunted house deal—a family comes to rent a white elephant summer house at a shockingly low price and (as the ad copy should have read) WIND UP PAYING WITH THEIR LIVES. But there are more effective sequences involving the father (played by the ominously suave Oliver Reed), in whom the house triggers horrific recurring nightmares which originally plagued him as a child. His dream sequences, shot in stark black and white, feature an absolutely hair-raising hearse driver, and the special effect said driver has on Reed is a great example of the power of subjective nightmares in movies.

Synchronicity (1984); A&M Video; Directed by Godley and Creme.

Imagine all the dumbest things you've ever seen in a rock concert movie and you've got a pretty good idea of what this Police tape is like. (It's from the Atlanta stop on the band's Synchronicity shindig, and it's the same show that aired on Showtime last year, plus four numbers.) Directors Godley and Creme offer a virtual litany of concert footage no-no's: lots of loving shots of the musicians' nose hairs, plenty of camera angles guaranteed to give you the bends, plus relentless cutting to the audience, showing you how good a time you *would* have had if only you'd been there. (As an extra bonus, these crowd shots seem to dote on the biggest nimrods available.) Even worse, the directors have adopted one of rock-video's most cynical assumptions: that any shot longer than ten seconds will bore the audience senseless. As to the band's performance, there's little of the rapport I witnessed at their last New York show, which, incidentally, managed to create infinitely more intimacy in Shea Stadium than this tape does in my living room.

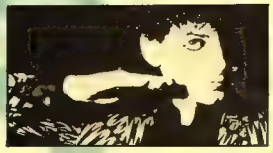
Jazzin' for Blue Jean (1984); Sony; Directed by Julien Temple.

Unlike Michael Jackson's horrifically dippy *Thriller* video, which just stretched a crappy song out for fifteen minutes, most of Bowie's twenty-minute *Jazzin' for Blue Jean* is conventional narrative, with the four-minute hit worked in. Bowie plays two roles here: Screaming Lord Byron, a rock star who's really more Joan Collins than Ziggy, and the lead character, who's half Woody Allen schlemiel, half Rupert Pupkin maniac. Actually, it makes perfect sense for Bowie to play the uncoolest nerd imaginable. Ideas and self-consciousness have always prevailed over sensuality in his work, and while this video may not be all that strikingly divorced from the singer's persona, within the context of Bowie-the-awkward-conceptualist it's interesting to speculate that this dorky character is indeed the one true David under all the masks.

Danspak II (1984); Sony; Directed by Merrill Aldighieri and Joe Tripician.

Nice to see this compilation tape of small-time Noo Yawk bands coming from a big-shot company like Sony—too bad they couldn't get better bands. Actually, there is one major-label guy involved, Jim Carroll doing "Sweet Jane," which is really just a throwaway homage to Lou Reed (Lou makes a cute cameo, incidentally). The only truly impressive clip here is Lenny Kaye's irresistible "I've Got a Right," which wittily juxtaposes religious, political, and fashion images to create a rousing First Amendment rock anthem. Still, next time Sony wants to capture *real* subterranean New York, maybe it oughta go for a great thrash band like Kraut, or whatever group the sainted Lydia Lunch is in this week.

—Jim Farber



RADIO HORROR

National Public Radio's *The Cabinet of Dr. Fritz* is a half-hour horror-fantasy series done the right way—adaptations of stories by Stephen King, Karl Edward Wagner and others, taped digitally in binaural sound. If you somehow missed this on NPR, not to worry; cassettes (and illustrated catalogs) are available by mail from the show's production company, the ZBS Foundation (RR#1, Box 1201, Fort Edward, NY 12828). Wagner's "Sticks" (from his 1978 *In a Lonely Place* collection), about fantasy illustrator Colin Leverett (Steven Keats) exploring a farmhouse over an ancient megalithic site, goes for a low-key delivery with the editorial correspondence of Wagner's original tale cleverly switched to messages left on a telephone answering machine. King's "The Mist" (*Dark Forces*), aired as a three-parter, employed thirty-five actors on the three-month production, for an aural terror tapestry of frenetic overlapping voices, music (EPCOT's Tim Clark), and eldritch sound effects that all combine to improve on King's original. Other writers adapted for *Fritz* include Craig Strete, Ishmael Reed (a *Mumbo Jumbo* six-parter), and Carlos Fuentes. The ZBS "3-D sound" is state-of-the-art—recorded with Sony's PCM digital system and then transferred to analog multitrack with dbx noise reduction. After sound effects are layered in along with music created on the Synclavier II digital synthesizer, it's mixed on the PCM system with a digital duplicating master made from the digital studio master. Cassettes are duped not at high-speed but in real-time duping on Sony UCX-S chrome tape, but less expensive, low-noise cassettes with Dolby B are also available. When the ZBS gang did their engaging NPR series *Muon over Morocco* (with background sounds recorded in Morocco) a few years back, they were just getting in gear. Now they're breaking the sound barrier.

Bhob

Disney

Any celebration of **Donald Duck** [illegible] most comprehensive [illegible] history of the [illegible] to [illegible] Symbolic cartoon in 1934, **Walt Disney's Donald Duck: 50 Years of Happy Frustration** [illegible] its pages [illegible] the world of the 1980s [illegible] A [illegible] in the Sun[illegible] animator, [illegible] which an [illegible] With a [illegible] Dick Landau's cartoon [illegible] Nash, this [illegible] bargain, [illegible]

DAME DICK

Ms. Tree *(Aardvark-Vanaheim) Say the title (and lead character's name) of this two-color monthly independent comic quickly—pronouncing the surname like a Southerner, with two syllables—and you'll get the idea. Detective novelist (and "Dick Tracy" scripter)* **Max Collins** *runs a tight-fisted, medium-boiled operation, steeped in pulp traditions, but adult in both scope (complex, realistic narratives) and focus (non-gratuitous sex with real emotional consequences, and a strong female protagonist who is vulnerable without being weak). But* **Terry Beatty's** *clunky, inconsistent, and unimaginatively sparse art almost sours the whole thing (practice those* **faces,** *man!)—a shame, since good comic writing is as scarce as Yoo-Hoo in Iran. Serial-hating organ-story fans should check out* **The Files of Ms. Tree,** *first in a promised omnibus series collecting the multi-issue comic stories into one tidy package.*

—Lou Stathis

(Aardvark-Vanaheim: P.O. Box 1674, Station C, Kitchener, Ontario, Canada N2G 4R2.)

Strips

YOU ARE NUTS, CORRIGAN! SHEESH! I'LL BET YOU LOOK FOR CROONS UNDER YOUR BED!
AND I'LL BET THEY'RE THERE, TOO, JEN! HAVE YOU AN ANSWER, PHIL?

NO, DESPITE THE MONIKER, **Comics Review** *AIN'T JUST ANOTHER LET'S-GET-SERIOUS-ABOUT-FUNNY-BOOKS MAG—IT'S A MONTHLY REPRINT SHOWCASE FOR DAILY NEWSPAPER STRIPS. CONSIDERING 1) HOW FEW NEWSPAPERS THERE ARE THESE DAYS, 2) HOW FEW OF them RUN DAILY STRIPS, AND 3) HOW TINY THE ONES THAT do RUN 'EM SHRINK 'EM DOWN TO, IT'S OBVIOUS THAT A USEFUL PURPOSE IS BEING SERVED HERE. CURRENT ISSUES FEATURE WEEKS'-WORTH CONCENTRATED DOSES OF STANDARD STUFF LIKE: "POPEYE," "FLASH GORDON," A NIFTY WESTERN CALLED "LATIGO," THE PATHETIC "SPIDERMAN," THE TIMELESS "GASOLINE ALLEY" (RUNNING SINCE 1918!), DIK BROWNE'S "HAGAR," THE TRUDEAUIAN "BLOOM COUNTY," AND A COUPLE OF OTHERS—BUT MOST NOTABLY, THE GREAT* **DAN O'NEILL'S** *WEEKLY SKETCHBOOK MUSING, CATCHILY TITLED "O'NEILL" (DIDN'T EVEN KNOW IT existed TILL I SAW IT HERE). THOSE WITH FOND MEMORIES OF THE OLD Air Pirates UNDERGROUNDS SHOULD HUSTLE SOME BUCKS TO THESE GUYS—O'NEILL IS AS CLEVER AND TRENCHANTLY AMUSING AS EVER. (P.O. BOX 1762, WAYNE, NJ 07470.)*

—LOU STATHIS

TV Guide

The Creature Features Movie Guide (Warner Books) lets you know whether or not to stay up late. Or, as Robert Bloch describes it, "... helps you avoid the terrors of televised trash and take the bore out of gore." Author **John Stanley**, host of "Creature Features" (KTVU-TV, Oakland) and co-scripter-producer of the satiric, Frisco-made *Nightmare in Blood* (1976), spent thirteen years compiling these 3000 capsule film reviews. A sample: "*Something Evil* (1972). Distinguished film-for-TV directed by Steven Spielberg, who displays imaginative use of camera to trick up some supernatural hokum taking place on a farm in Bucks County, Pennsylvania. Darren McGavin, Sandy Dennis, Ralph Bellamy." Some short, some long, but all get right to the point. So complete he even reviews his own movie! Topped with a brief Fritz Leiber intro and an effective cover painting by James Warhola

—**Bhob**

Terry Cloth

When **"Terry and the Pirates"** started in the newspaper funnies in 1934, it seemed like just another adventure strip with a boy hero and exotic locations. But creator **Milton Caniff** quickly turned it into the finest adventure story of the day. In Volume I of NBM's Flying Buttress Classics Library deluxe reprint, ***Terry and the Pirates***, the artwork is still crude, but the interesting characterizations are already coming to life. Volume II, due out shortly, should represent "Terry" at its peak—which is to say, as one of the two or three best comics in history. This hardcover volume offers crisp black-and-white reproduction of the 1934-1935 Sundays and dailies (which at first involved two discrete story lines) and is limited to 1,200 copies.

—Michael S. Barson

The Housewives of 2001

Using as its departure point Arthur C. Clarke's wry comment "The future isn't what it used to be," Joseph J. Corn's and Brian Horrigan's *Yesterday's Tomorrows: Past Visions of the American Future* (Summit/Simon & Schuster) is a nostalgic look at the ways in which early-twentieth-century America imagined its future. This visual history has been gleaned from an assortment of advertisements, pulp magazine covers, cartoons, toys, architectural drawings, and photographs. The result is a charming evocation of such un-shocking futures as "The Home of Tomorrow" (including the RCA/Whirlpool Miracle Kitchen of 1956), "The Community of Tomorrow," "The Weapons and Warfare of Tomorrow," and—my favorite—"The Transportation of Tomorrow." You haven't lived until you've seen the Model Transoceanic Passenger Plane of 1929. Crash!

—Michael S. Barson

Sterling Says

by Larry Sloman

It was almost Christmas and it was time for a vacation. Now I had the choice of going to Europe and rendezvousing in Paris with this femme fatale that I was currently fixated on, or I could be a real American and go on down to Texas and spend a week with Kinky Friedman, the infamous Texas Jewboy, on his ranch just outside of Kerrville in the hill country of that great big state.

I opted for the ranch and the hills and some much needed r and r. Life was getting a bit hectic in New York, New York. I had been getting very little sleep, and on the very eve of my departure I had gotten totally wasted with a very nice young woman who ran a discreet house of bondage and who had just authored a book due out from Grove Press called *The Correct Sadist*. Texas would be a change of pace.

Of course, I had an ulterior motive, too. Before driving down to Kerrville, I was going to spend a few days in Austin, and since I had this first *Heavy Metal* column due, it would be a chance to take a side trip and look up Sterling Morrison and do a piece on the 1985 Velvet Underground renaissance. It seems that Polygram Records had obtained the backlist of the defunct Verve label and were about to rerelease, after years of being out of print, the first three Velvet Underground albums. What's more, they had found the legendary tapes of the "fourth" Velvet album that MGM refused to issue. The tapes had been doctored a bit to meet contemporary musical standards, but they still were an invaluable cultural find, something akin to the apocryphal gospels unearthed at Nag Hammadi. This news may not exactly knock the dicks of the Van Halen generation to their watch pockets, but to those of us who were functioning in the sixties, the Velvet Underground were the cat's pajamas. The gray flannel mass culture of the Eisenhower years was being challenged in the sixties by a mutant offshoot of bohemian sensibility, a subterranean virus that was spearheaded by the leading musicians of the day.

In New York, for example, in 1967, you could walk a few short blocks in the Village and see either the Fugs or the Mothers of Invention destroy everything that was sacred to J. Edgar Hoover. Then there were the Velvets—a precocious Long Island literary Jew, his Long Island goyim counterpart, and one manic musical genius from Wales. Lou Reed, Sterling Morrison, and John Cale. Add to this mix an androgynous female drummer named Moe and one Teutonic ice queen chanteuse called Nico, and it was painfully clear that we are not talking here of Jay and the Americans.

For five years the Velvet Underground spewed their strange message to a faithful core group of cognoscenti gathered mainly in the media cities of the U.S. They were championed by Warhol and his boho society scene, they were idolized by the burgeoning drug-addled escapist camp, and they could count many followers among those who thought the genital embrace between a man and a woman was repulsive or just plain silly.

By 1970 they had slowly fallen apart. Lou Reed went on to release a series of solo efforts, some astonishingly brilliant (*Berlin*), some very uneven, and one just plain perverse (*Metal Machine Music*). Cale, too, had done a number of beautiful albums, and has also produced the next next wave—Patti Smith, Jonathan Richman, and the Squeeze. Nico put out a few eclectic albums of her own, and even Moe, of the squeaky voice, released her own LP. But curiously, through the seventies and now halfway into the eighties, we hadn't heard a peep from the man who was just as responsible as anyone else for that bizarre, atonal, haunting Velvet sound. Sterling was living in Austin, Texas, teaching literature at the university and writing his doctoral thesis on an English medieval poet named Kittle.

It didn't feel much like Christmas in Texas. It was seventy degrees and I was staying in north Austin with Dylan Ferrero, Kinky's road manager, who lived on the outskirts of town in a working-class, pool-halled, topless-dancing area of town that was half Mexican and half poor white trash. Austin had changed considerably since I had last been there. The town was exploding with an influx of the new technological elite, which had led the local newspapers to dub the area "Silicon Prairie." This wave of immigration had aroused the ire of the old residents, who didn't much prefer yuppies to "spics."

Sterling didn't have to worry about this. He was living right near the campus, a

protected ivory-tower zone. He told us that we'd recognize his apartment by the candles that were burning in the windows. Inside, Sterling and his wife, Martha, and their nine-year-old, Maryanne, were making cookies. It was a cozy apartment. The Christmas tree was aglow, the candles were burning on down, there was Christmas sheet music open on the piano in the corner, and Martha was fixing drinks for us in the kitchen. An incongruous place to talk about the Velvet Underground? Maybe, but maybe not.

"I was on the phone the other day with the publicist at Polygram," Sterling said as he put the "new" Velvet cassette on. "She said that Polygram is treating this like they found the Holy Grail. I didn't point out to her that the Grail quest was what destroyed King Arthur's Court."

Sterling immediately advanced the tape to a cut on side two to make sure that the record company had erased some offensive (to his ears) singing on one cut. He was amazed to find it excised, and then he sat down and we started talking about the old times.

"The old chronology, huh? Well, I met Lou up at Syracuse. Lou graduated with the stipulation that he be off the campus the minute he completed his last final. He had personally insulted the head of the Young Americans for Freedom in print. Lou just tore him to pieces, and this guy's father was a big corporation lawyer and they were going to sue Lou. But they were so obnoxious that the dean finally sided with Lou and told him to keep his mouth shut, take his finals, and go away and they'd give him his degree."

"What were your first impressions of Lou?" I asked.

"Well, I was impressed with him. He liked the things I liked, he liked to play guitar. He wrote, he was an English major, all that stuff. He struck you as a self-consciously creative person. We were all being very creative. I was very influenced by the Beats. Those are the people who woke me up in high school. Beatniks did things, they read books and they knew art. Along with the free love and drugs and anything else they could think of. That was impressive. Hippies were vegetables.

"Somebody once asked me what was the underlying influence of the Velvet Underground. Well, it was black music. Rock wasn't even invented when I was playing in high school. We learned by trading riffs. One guy knows a Jimmy Reed riff, one guy knows Bo Diddley. That's how it goes."

"You and Lou would actually sit around and trade blues riffs?"

"Yeah, the mysteries of Lightning Hopkins revealed," Sterling chuckled. "We used to call our first Velvet songs by a name that indicated what the song grew out of. Like 'Run, Run, Run,' for example. We used to call that 'John Lee Hooker' because that harp is an old John Lee riff. 'The Gift' we called 'Booker T.' because there was something Steve Crockeresque about it."

By 1964 both Lou and Sterling had drifted down to New York again, Sterling fighting the "mystique" of the Big Apple in his first apartment on Central Park West, Lou safely ensconced in his parents' house in Freeport, Long Island. But it took the input of a classically trained child piano prodigy to push the Long Island blues brothers to the outer reaches of the musical terrain.

John Cale had first encountered Reed when he showed up for a session at a Tin Pan Alley schlock supermarket album company. Lou was a staff writer there and had come up with what was thought would be the next dance craze, a tune called "The Ostrich." That never panned out, but Cale saw some merit in the songs that Lou was writing off-hours—less commercial ditties like "Heroin" and "I'm Waiting for the Man."

So Lou and Sterling and John started working together, playing everything from free-form trance music to Smokey Robinson songs. Add to this mixture an avant-garde drummer named Angus Maclise and this confluence of talents was about to become a group. "We wanted to develop along different lines," Sterling remembered. "Angus knew a whole lot about Oriental music. He was real in with the film people, too. John knew classical. Lou and I, for good or ill, knew pop and black music and how songs ought to be structured. John knew how they ought to be structured in ways we never dreamed of. So we'd start to play a conventional song and then sort of jazz it up. Just play on and on. Occasionally the music would coalesce into something that was actually an identifiable song, but then it would just disappear. The first thing we really did was

Sloman: "Halfway into the eighties, we hadn't heard a peep from the man who was just as responsible as anyone else for that bizarre, atonal, haunting Velvet sound."

background music to underground films."

It was 1965 and they were a group, sort of. They were working up Lou's songs and playing the avant-garde circuit occasionally, and one day that summer Angus brought home a paperback from a subway bookstall on Forty-second Street. The cover featured a shiny black boot and a whip and it was called *The Velvet Underground*, a lurid exposé of the S & M scene.

So they appropriated the name. "We didn't know anything about the book, really," Sterling said, "but it was a nice name and we were involved in underground cinema. So the Velvet Underground was acceptable."

But Angus was not long for the newly named group. That winter they got their first booking, opening up for a group called the Myddle Class in, of all places, Summit, New Jersey. The gig paid seventy-five dollars. To Angus that was selling out. He bailed out right before the Summit gig and they brought in Moe Tucker, the little sister of a classmate of Lou and Sterling's from Syracuse. They schlepped out to Summit, played "There She Goes Again," "Venus in Furs," and "Heroin," and then came back to the city. Before long they got a week-long stint at the Cafe Bizarro. One night Warhol came around, and suddenly the Velvets had a patron.

"Warhol was an excellent influence," Sterling remembered. "He gave us constant reassurance that we were doing the right thing. Plus we got to go to a lot of good parties. We still lived in our wretched slums, only coming out at night when we went good places."

Warhol made them part of his surreal mixed-media sideshow, *The Exploding Plastic Inevitable*, and they played hip venues to widely varying critical reaction. The frenzy of *The Exploding Plastic Inevitable* shows was captured on the first album—savage, throbbing, howling, at times haunting and ethereal. And over this, Lou's lyrics.

Now, it is generally acknowledged that sex and drugs go hand in hand with rock 'n' roll. But this was the wrong sex and the wrong drugs. "Shiny shiny shiny boots of leather, the whiplash girlchild in the dark. . . . Strike, dear mistress, and cure his heart," Lou sang ominously on "Venus in Furs," a song based on Sacher-Masoch's classic novel of the same name. Then there was "Heroin," a seven-minute exploration into the bittersweet nothingness of junk. And "I'm Waiting for the Man," a sociologically accurate portrayal of copping from the Negroes uptown. These songs seemed to stick in the media's mind, obscuring some of the gentler tunes on the album like "Sunday Morning" or "I'll Be Your Mirror," Nico's showpiece. One critic even suggested that the band was the "product of some secret marriage between Bob Dylan and the Marquis de Sade."

"The problem with Lou is that he didn't really want to sing anybody else's words," Sterling recalled as he got up to get another beer. "And also he was very very fast with the throwaway lyrics. So if we had a song that was musically complete and all it lacked was some profound lyric, well, Lou would come up with a lyric instantly. Which occasionally became the final lyric, which is too bad. Some of them really needed thought and didn't get it. 'Venus in Furs' was something he thought about, and it shows. It wasn't because he wanted us to go in an S & M direction. He just happened to write this song—he read that stuff, Sacher-Masoch and de Sade—but

people reacted and said, 'My God, who would do such a song. Obviously only people really into that stuff.' But there was nothing else on the record that even vaguely suggests S & M. My principal interest in 'Venus in Furs' was the sound of it. No song ever sounded like that song does. That was our best, to me. That song scared everybody. We thought about that one for a long time. Every bit of it, the bass line, everything. That's the one I'm most proud of. I'm proud of the sound of 'Heroin,' too. But for me it's too folky lyrically. It has protest elements, vague allusions like 'Dead bodies piled up in mounds,' that sort of thing."

Well, we had taken care of the deviant sex. What about the drugs? Certainly you couldn't write "I'm Waiting for the Man" by reading the *PDR*. These guys had to be part of the drug subculture.

"I had seen it done around me," Sterling said wryly, "but I wasn't as knowledgeable as Lou was. Lou at that time was recovering from hepatitis, so he may have had a further interest in it. He did the lyric for 'Heroin' when he was home recuperating at his parents' house. He should have been thinking about other things like mineral water and fruits and nuts, but he was thinking about heroin, so that's what he wrote about."

If the first Velvet album was experimental, their second effort was a total anarchic aural assault. Nico was gone—it was too boring for her to be in a group where she didn't sing every song—and with her departure there was nobody around to sing those Brechtian ballads Lou had penned for her. Now the band could be unleashed. Besides, there was a new drug—amphetamine. White Light/White Heat. From the opening strains of that title track to the closing "Sister Ray," a seventeen-minute foray into a surreal demimonde populated by sailors with syringes and ding-dongs getting sucked-off by transvestites, this was the quintessential Velvet Underground. Four free spirits flailing away in the void. "We drink or break open our veins, solely to know, I want to know," the Fugs were singing at this same time. Listen to "White Light/White Heat" and you might not know, but you'd get an inkling.

"That was the time to hear the band," Sterling fondly recalled. "Sixty-seven, sixty-eight, those were my favorite days with the band. But then it stopped being fun when John was forced out of the band. Lou and John were arguing about this and that . . ."

"Aesthetic differences?"

"I guess really it was. Oh, I would pitch in every now and again, but I felt I didn't have to, John was more or less representing my point of view. Lou was overly interested in lyrics and we weren't. That was the basic thing. Lou wanted to say something. Generally I don't care about rock 'n' roll lyrics, and John was carrying the burden of that viewpoint. I was faced with the option of dissolving the band and I chose not to, simply because I said, 'Well, I'm having fun doing this now.' So I sold ol' John out, and I ought not to have. People always said that Lou wanted to be the big star. Well, that's cool. So maybe John actually threatened Lou. I'm too low-key to have done that."

The third album, *The Velvet Underground*, was the embodiment of Lou's triumph. Cale was gone and with him his dissonant atonal viola screeching. Gone, too, were all the other external

Morrison: "People always said that Lou [Reed] wanted to be the big star. Well, that's cool. So maybe John [Cale] actually threatened Lou. I'm too low-key to have done that."

trappings of the old Velvet Underground image. Why, there was Lou on the cover looking just like a preppie. Of course the back cover photo, which was Lou alone, split in half and juxtaposed upside down against itself, was probably more indicative of his state of mind. While you couldn't say that the concerns of the album were wholesome ("Pale Blue Eyes" seems to be about adultery, and "Some Kinda Love" requires some K-Y on the shoulder), the prevailing spirit of the album was one of redemption, renewal, and transcendence. One might even call this a folk album.

"I never cared for that album for that reason," Sterling admitted. "The original mix was much better. It doesn't sound like some guy in his closet, which is what Lou did when he put the vocals right up front. Lou Reed on parade, that's what you get. And not very good vocals, either."

But Sterling stayed on with the band, putting in his time while he was finishing his course work at City College. During those famous Max's gigs in the summer of 1970 (which were released as a basement-type tape on Atlantic), Sterling would play his set, then head straight up to the dressing room and read *Vanity Fair*. The group managed one more studio album, *Loaded*, but then dissolved into a cesspool of bad feelings.

So now it's nearly fourteen years later, and if the Polygram machine has anything to say about it, the Velvets are going to be rehabilitated and take their proper place in the rock pantheon. This must be a source of pride for Sterling, no?

"I don't know what people liked about us, particularly. I could see people liking some of the heavy-metal portions of what we did. And the sense of rebelliousness in the lyrics. We did what we felt like doing, so maybe people admire that. Some people see us as S & M freaks, but obviously that's ridiculous. People saw us as a group willing to do what they felt like doing, people who obviously only cared about making the kind of records they felt like making with no attempt to manufacture an image, no attempt to ingratiate themselves with the media, no attempt to ingratiate themselves with the public. Half the stuff we did is probably repellent to a mass audience. So what? Some bands are designed for a mass audience and some aren't. We weren't. I think Lou wanted that more than the rest of us. He wanted to go pop. John and I didn't have that much of a pop sensibility."

The evening was wearing down. Dylan had split long ago, Martha had retired a few hours previously, and Sterling and I had finished the beer. "We should wind this up soon," Sterling said. "I got to get up early and make more cookies."

Sterling pointed to an acoustic guitar that was propped up against the wall over by the piano. There were no strings on it. "You could say that behind you is an acoustic guitar with no strings. It's like Odysseus's bow. When I string it up, it's death, but I can't do that until twenty years have elapsed. I have playing guitars under the bed. But if I got them out, what would I want to do? Someone asked me if I planned a comeback. And I said, 'And do what? What needs to be done?' Do I need to make money like the rest of those people? Yeah, that'd be nice. Except I didn't sell out before, so I'd be reluctant to do it now. I would like to play with ultra-modern equipment. That would be interesting, to amass some real zinger amps. I was playing down here with a local group, the Bizarros, from '77 to '79, and we did very well, we had a great time, but then people got ambitious and I wasn't ambitious. They wanted to tour and make records and start calling people up and I said, 'No, no. All I want to do is play in Texas roadhouses. And for no money. I want to go back to the way it was when I started. Just do it for laughs.' So my experience with the Bizarros meant that I couldn't function on any fun musical level, which is a real grim realization.

"I miss guitar playing. I don't practice much. I like to play every now and then, but if someone came along with the opportunity I'd have to say 'Well, I can't. Listen, I'm not in shape. No chops.' After I finish my degree, maybe, but part of the reason my degree drags on is to insulate me from that sort of thing. I didn't used to think that, but lately I do. You ought to be able to fool around, though, and I discovered the hard way that I couldn't. And it cost me friendships, that's the really hard thing to take."

Sterling fell silent. It was almost 2 A.M., and I had overstayed my welcome, but something that he had said earlier in the evening when we were listening to the new

LP had stuck in my mind. He had wondered aloud why Lou seemed to feel so self-satisfied. I asked him what he had meant by that.

Sterling shrugged. "I don't know. Do you think his work is so great? I don't know, of course, what he's trying to do. He certainly had the most ambition of all of us, or he was the most focused. I prefer John's solo stuff. John's is a strange bag; he tries harder on them, I think. Lou's releases sort of baffle me. The worst song on any of our albums is better than 'Sally Can't Dance' or that current thing, 'I Love You, Suzanne.' That must be the worst ever. Trivial lyrics, no chords. Lou wants to be Paul Simon; somewhere deep down, that's what he wants. It's not even deep down, he's been hanging out with Paul." Sterling laughed.

I asked if he was still in contact with Lou.

"Not so much lately because of the legal disputes. The royalties. Lou is willing to be friends if he gets to keep all the money. He's done some shocking manipulations. You know, we were all friends before any of this stuff happened, but that's not the way he's functioning these days, so there's no reason I should talk to him. Look, we really should wrap this up."

I packed up, we got our coats, and Sterling and I walked out to his car, an old blue Toyota, with a "No Nukes" bumper sticker on one fender and a "Mondale/Ferraro" one on the other. Sterling was telling me how much they liked living in Texas, especially Martha. In New York, there were no friends for the kid, and Martha was always afraid.

We talked a bit about the contemporary music scene on the drive back to where I was staying. "It's really awful, isn't it?" Sterling said. "The only thing I could compare it to is the Paul and Paula era. Black music is a bitter disappointment. Prince is just trying to be Hendrix. Purple Haze, Purple Rain. That's no accident."

How about producing? Maybe that was a way for Sterling to get back into music. I seemed to be grasping for straws.

He made a face. "The thing that stops me from producing is that when I was first starting people insisted they knew exactly what we needed to do. They had the answers. I was put off by it. Let me make the dumb records the way I thought they should be made. I don't want to come on now like the kind of asshole I looked down upon then."

We drove on down the I-35 in silence. "I'm really shy," Sterling finally offered. "Rather than be misunderstood, I'd rather say and do nothing. Word is out on me that I don't give a shit, but that's not so. When the new wave scene was going on here I could be seen slinking in and out of the clubs listening. I wish there was a band I felt strongly about. I wish I could give you a group that I liked. Who should I like? Who should I mention that would make people think I was a great guy?" He laughed. "Nanette Fabray was as good a singer as Madonna. I don't like Springsteen. 'Born in the USA' is the worst thing I've ever heard. You know that patriotism is the last refuge of scoundrels. Calling him the Boss is regrettable. He's got no melody, no vocals, no chords, and words, words, words that don't do much to me. I don't see him as a street-wise punk. He's too scrawny and stupid. I like the Go-Go's, their first album. I've always approved of girls having their own bands."

We were nearing my place—I could tell by the topless bars. "Maybe Maryanne'll grow up and start her own band," I said cheerfully.

"She's taking piano now, so she'll probably branch out to synthesizers," Sterling said. "But I don't know. It's such an unhealthy life."

We pulled up into the driveway, and Sterling offered his hand. A soul handshake. He mumbled some apologies again for being so tired and said he hoped there was something he had said that I could use. And then he smiled. "Tell John that he needs me to play guitar for him." Then he made a U-turn and headed back to student housing.

Photo: Nat Finkelstein/Star File

Blue Velvets: l. to r. Maureen Tucker, John Cale, Sterling Morrison, and Lou Reed

Sterling Says...

The "new" Velvet Underground album, *VU*, is a delightful discovery. A true bridge between the third album and the pop-oriented *Loaded*, it features good ensemble playing, fine vocals by Lou and Doug Yule, and charming versions of songs that would later show up recycled on some of Lou's solo efforts.

But to get a true assessment of the album's worth, we went to one of the severest critics of the whole Velvet oeuvre, their own guitarist Sterling Morrison. Here is his analysis, cut by cut:

Can't Stand It Anymore—Okay. Worth preserving. Good vocal. Bass lacks punch, which undercuts effectiveness of guitar solo.

Stephanie Says—Pretty. Cale plays bass, celeste, and the very romantic viola line. We could do songs like this any time we felt like it.

She's My Best Friend—Not one of Doug's better vocals (nor one of Moe's better drum parts). Guitar playing adds interest to otherwise pedestrian little ditty.

Lisa Says—Monotonous and incomplete: the missing "something(s)" I trust we would have added later. Lacks "oomph." I think the vocal is singularly poor. Lou's voice is weak, strained, and scratchy, and he is fishing for notes during the bridge. On this cut, in other words, Lou sounds like he does nowadays, which is a far cry from how he used to sound.

Ocean—This song had potential but it is no longer recognizable here. The "1812 Overture" bombardment from Moe needs desperately to be toned down and the contrastingly pleasant background harmonies brought up in the mix.

Foggy Notion—My guitar leads should be up front more (the eternal lament). Moves along pretty well at the end. Unpretentious.

Inside Your Heart—A relic from the days when we were a "fun" bunch who liked each other's company (if not necessarily each other's background singing).

One of These Days—Improved version over "rough mix" because it brings to the fore a previously buried guitar figure. The slide part should be up for the solo, however. Good vocals.

Andy's Chest –Nice stinging treble guitars and peculiar shuffling rhythm. I don't care for the lyrics, but the track is interesting (not pretentious like the "Transformer" version of this piece).

I'm Sticking with You—Very pleasant; succeeds at being what it was intended to be. Unfolds musically like a poker hand—you don't show all you got until the end. The direct link to *Loaded*, and thus appropriately last on the album.

Overall, I find this stuff pretty tame, but I'm glad it is available in listenable form. The record probably won't bring in any new "fans," in my opinion, but happily it will please (or amuse) some old ones.

For Publication: Interview with

by James Verniere

Paul Bartel

We're all dog food to Paul Bartel. At least that's the sentiment that informs *Eating Raoul*, Bartel's satire of American consumerism in which he and his delightful co-star, Mary Woronov, murder swingers whose bodies end up at a doggie-food plant. *Eating Raoul*, which copped the most attention, critical and popular, at the 1982 New York Film Festival, was one of the most successful non-exploitation independent features of the decade. The odd thing is that despite a considerable following, and a collection of rave reviews from the established press, Bartel remains an unacquired taste to the corporations that run Hollywood's film studios.

Raised in Montclair, New Jersey, and educated at UCLA and the Centro Sperimentale di Cinematografia in Italy, Bartel first established himself as a filmmaker in the late sixties as a member of the New York underground when his two shorts, *Naughty Nurses* and *The Secret Cinema*, attracted favorable critical attention. *Private Parts* (1973), Bartel's first feature (and a film produced by Roger Corman's brother, Gene), further established him as a master of the offbeat. A demented study of sex and violence set in a crumbling L.A. hotel packed full of loonies, *Private Parts* was yanked after a brief release by MGM, but has since attracted cult status on the repertory circuit. Bartel's second feature, the now-legendary *Death Race 2000* (1975), was his first major success, perhaps because he hit upon the perfect combination of warped vision and unalloyed commercialism. A futuristic action film/social satire, *Death Race 2000* is the story of race-car drivers who score points by maiming and kiling pedestrians. Made for less than $500,000 and starring David Carradine and a pre-*Rocky* Sylvester Stallone, *Death Race 2000* earned more than $5 million at home and much more abroad, where it was a smash in Europe, Japan, and Australia. In fact, the film was so popular in Australia that many believe it inspired at least one imitation: George Miller's *Mad Max* (1980).

But it was *Eating Raoul* that established Bartel as a recognizable figure in American film, in part because he cast himself as Woronov's nerdish husband in the film. Since then, Bartel has directed *Not for Publication*, a spoof of American politics and exploitative tabloids, and *Lust in the Dust*, a parody of Westerns, starring Tab Hunter and the inimitable Divine.

Although he has at least two more films in the planning stages, the future seems a bit fuzzy for Paul Bartel. What is clear is that he is more of an intellectual than his previous work might suggest, and that if the film studios hold him in contempt, the feeling is mutual.

—James Verniere

Eating Raoul Director Paul Bartel

HM: *Eating Raoul* was generally perceived as a satire. Is that right?

PB: Well, yes, on the whole I consider it a satire of middle-class values, not so much of consumer culture. I was more concerned with the relative negative values of sex and violence in our society, and since those are the staples of motion picture entertainment, it seemed like an appropriate basis for a movie.

HM: What was the inspiration for your follow-up film, *Not for Publication*?

PB: *Not for Publication* was written some fifteen years ago, and at the time it was the kind of movie I most wanted to make. By a peculiar coincidence, having had to make other pictures to get into the movie business and then having made *Raoul* as a very personal film, I was back again to wanting to make *Not for Publication*. It is a valentine to the movies of the thirties and forties and to their romantic illusions.

HM: If it is a valentine, it's also iconoclastic in the way that *Eating Raoul* is. I mean the heroine of those old movies didn't sleep with the villain just because she felt like getting laid. Jean Arthur would not approve.

PB: That is a violation of the conventions, but I hope that, just as in *Eating Raoul*, the principal characters, although insane and homicidal, are also sweet, that if I violate the conventions, I am still true to the spirit. It's an optimistic, basically good-hearted approach. But I must admit that one female critic did object to the heroine's sleeping with the bad guy.

HM: But that does go on in real life.

PB: It's like *conversation* these days.

HM: Has it been easier for you to get your films backed now that you've had a hit?

PB: Easier, perhaps, but not easy. I've been independent all my life. My first feature was produced by Roger Corman's brother. And then I worked for Roger for a while—*Death Race 2000*, *Cannonball*. More lately, the money for *Not for Publication* came from an independent source in England. They sought me out and let me make whatever I wanted.

HM: How did that feel after years of struggling?

PB: Delightful.

HM: Where do you get ideas for scripts like, say, *Lust in the Dust*?

PB: Actually, *Lust in the Dust* was an assignment, although I did revise the script considerably.

HM: The film stars Divine. Doesn't everyone associate that performer with John Waters?

PB: Well, yes, and I'm a great fan of John's. In fact, in the sequel to *Eating Raoul*, which is called *Bland Ambition* and is written but not financed, we have a large role for John. He'll play the head of an orphanage.

HM: But what about ideas for your own scripts? Where do they come from?

PB: Out of my subconscious. The original idea for *Eating Raoul* was just to do a movie with Mary Woronov. My original idea was that we should play detectives like Mr. and Mrs. North, but my writing partner, Dick Blackburn, felt that had been done too much on TV, so he suggested that we do a variation on *The Honeymoon Killers*.

HM: Was Blackburn referring to the movie or the true story that it was based on?

PB: The movie, the one with Shirley Stoler and Tony Lo Bianco. I'm often inspired by old movies and doing variations on them.

HM: There was a time when movies inspired by other films—films full of *hommages*—were well received. But there seems to be a backlash against them today.

PB: I know what you mean, and I'm waiting to see what happens to *Not for Publication* because of that. I wanted to make a charming movie that plays variations on old themes, but what I'm getting is disappointment from the critics,

"The studio was considering adapting a work by Oscar Wilde and asked if Wilde was available to write the script."

in large part because it isn't farther out than *Raoul*. I probably should have done a *film noir* or a musical as a follow-up.

HM: What about *Lust in the Dust*? Will it be out there?

PB: *Lust in the Dust* is a very conventional parody Western. It has lots of sex scenes. It has an edge to it. I have a feeling that the audience that loved *Revenge of the Nerds* would be just as entertained.

HM: When you say sex scenes, do you mean farcical sex with Divine and Tab Hunter?

PB: Yes, it's rape in the second reel.

HM: Will you run afoul of the MPAA?

PB: I don't know yet, but we did with *Not for Publication*, because they detected "simulated sodomy" in the orgy scene.

HM: It seems to me that you could have changed your independent status as a filmmaker at a couple of junctions. Why didn't you?

PB: It's partially by choice, but not completely. The studios have never really warmed to me. They are not interested in having me work for them.

HM: Why is that?

PB: It's purely economic. My movies have never made enough money to register in their minds. *Eating Raoul* made money relative to its cost but not relative to the figures that interest studios.

HM: But some mainstream directors make flop after expensive flop and continue to land big films.

PB: They're in the club.

HM: What kinds of things make you laugh? What do you do for fun?

PB: Generally, I seek the company of amusing friends. I have a collection of sixteen- and thirty-five-millimeter films, actually a joint collection that I share with Joe Dante and another friend.

HM: What sort of films have you contributed to the collection?

PB: Mostly European films and a few American films that I've gotten through the black market. I also collect books, first editions. I track down the writers I like and get them to sign my copies.

HM: Which writers?

PB: Philip Roth, John le Carré, Harry Crews, Toni Morrison, Harold Pinter.

HM: You sound like a closet intellectual.

PB: I've always liked to read. I love theater, too. I collect Sondheim.

HM: Why haven't you approached these authors to work on a script with you?

PB: I've never been in a position to offer them the kind of money I assume they get.

HM: Given your refined sensibility, to what do you attribute your warped sense of humor?

PB: Gee, I don't know. The movies I liked when I was growing up were made by Billy Wilder, Hitchcock, and Walt Disney. But when I was in college I was drawn to Ionesco and Beckett.

HM: Do you think that the other art forms feed into film?

PB: Oh, very much so. They do for me.

HM: Then how do you explain the low esteem film continues to be held in by so-called "serious" artists?

PB: Well, it is true that some directors seem to be more influenced by films than by the other arts—Brian De Palma, for instance. But Marty Scorsese seems very in touch with literary and social forces.

HM: Do you think it's true that contemporary American films are more influenced by television than by anything else?

PB: Yes, and it's a terrible influence, especially since television is the ultimate purchaser of films to begin with. To start out making films you can see on television is moronic. Of course, there are exceptions. "Saturday Night Live" as both a training ground and a satirical form had a beneficial influence on films.

HM: Is filmmaking for you a way to indulge in the fantasies you had as a

teenager in Montclair, New Jersey?
PB: I suppose so, although I'm not terribly analytical. Moreover, the films I make are always written in collaboration with someone else. One of the things I like about filmmaking is that it's a collaborative medium, a lot of social intercourse. So I don't think my films end up as pure expressions of my fantasies or subconscious longings. They're confections, and I am basically interested in entertaining.
HM: Were you an entertaining child?
PB: I did some acting when I was ten or twelve. I guess I had an urge to entertain.
HM: After graduating from UCLA you studied film in Italy on a Fulbright scholarship. Have you ever considered making a film in Europe? Apparently you're very well regarded there.
PB: I don't know if I'm well regarded there. *Death Race 2000* was a hit, but *Eating Raoul* was never bought for distribution in France or Italy.
HM: Why not?
PB: For several reasons. First of all, their currency was so low that they didn't want to spend money acquiring American films that didn't have big stars. Plus, the film was shown in Germany, where it was well received by the critics, but it didn't do any business. Oddly enough, *Death Race 2000* was just reissued in Europe under a new name. It was originally distributed with a French title that literally meant *Death Race 2000*. The new title translates as *The Roadmasters*, very redolent of *The Road Warrior*.
HM: Which was inspired by *Death Race 2000* to begin with.
PB: Well, it's true it was a smash in Australia. George Miller told me it inspired him, and I was very flattered. But he certainly took the raw ideas and perfected them.
HM: Would you ever consider doing that kind of film again?
PB: I have a script called *Frankencar*, which was very nearly produced by United Artists, but they withdrew a week before preproduction was to start. I'd like to do that some time. It's a very funny script.
HM: What's the plot?
PB: The premise is that a young race-car driver has his neurosurgeon father develop a car that responds directly to his brain. It simply does what he thinks. But it's sabotaged by a financier who's trying to get control of the invention. The driver is burned and loses his arms and legs and part of his face. His father announces that he has died but smuggles his still living body out of the hospital. He then rebuilds the car with the kid in it, so that it becomes a living being—part man, part car. The rest of the film is revenge time. I wrote the film with Dick Blackburn, and one day it will get made.
HM: I don't suppose you'd like to hook up with Mr. Corman again.
PB: No. Mr. Corman is in the Mr. Corman business.
HM: It's odd that you ended up at Corman's New World pictures to begin with. After all, you'd studied film in Europe at the height of the New Wave.
PB: Odd, but not impossible.
HM: In fact, you studied film during a period when many filmmakers were being influenced by Marxist theory.
PB: But Marxism was never one of my interests.

"I suppose [I am] an unreliable director of strange comedies."

HM: Still, some Marxist critics have made quite a lot out of the social criticism in *Eating Raoul* and *Private Parts*.
PB: Some time ago when I was in Cannes, I met Tobe Hooper, who had just finished *Texas Chainsaw Massacre*, which was being screened as part of the Directors' Fortnight. At the time, a Polish director explained to me the art of socialist explication and said that any work can be rationalized in socialist terms. To prove his point we got together and explicated *Texas Chainsaw Massacre* in socialist terms. "Clearly, the murderous butchers were metaphors for the distortions of a consumer society," and so forth and so on. I saw that explication quoted in paper after paper.
HM: You're a well-educated and perhaps intellectual person. Does that make it difficult for you to deal with the people who run the film studios in this country?
PB: Let me tell you another story. I know one intimate associate of the head of a major film studio who, when told the studio was considering adapting a work by Oscar Wilde, asked if Wilde was available to write the script. This studio head has in fact refused even to screen *Lust in the Dust*. And the head of publicity at that studio told me he would prefer not to look at my film because if he saw it and liked it and recommended it, he might be fired.
HM: How do you cope with the problems that arise when you work in an art form that is also a big business?
PB: I just try to work with people that have liked my films.
HM: But don't you also have to knock yourself out of the mainstream?
PB: Well, I'm not particularly interested in making a film like, for instance, *Gremlins*—which I liked very much. I would prefer to go on making unusual and offbeat pictures. The problem with the studios is that they perceive your strength to be whatever you did that was successful. So at one time I was a hot director of automobile action films.
HM: And what are you now?
PB: I suppose an unreliable director of strange comedies. ■

NY Informer ***editor Troppogrosso (Richard Paul) describes the key elements of the ideal tabloid news story in*** **Not for Publication.**

The European Humor Connection

The April issue of the National Lampoon *is the most important and funniest collection of European humor ever to appear in any American magazine.*

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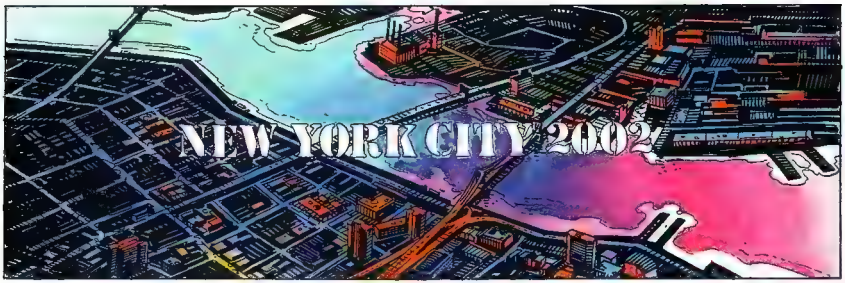
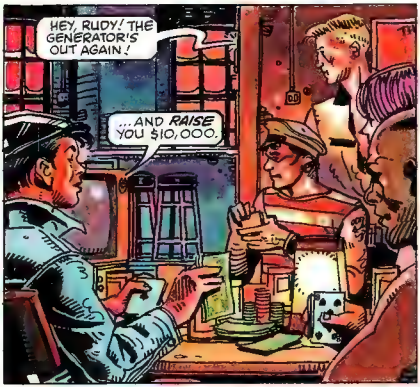
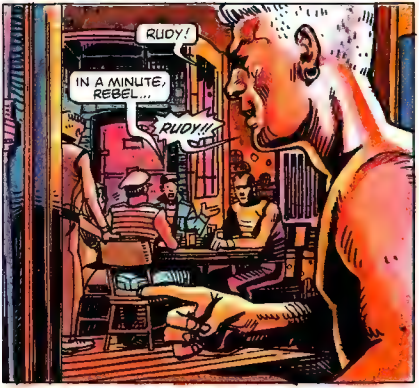
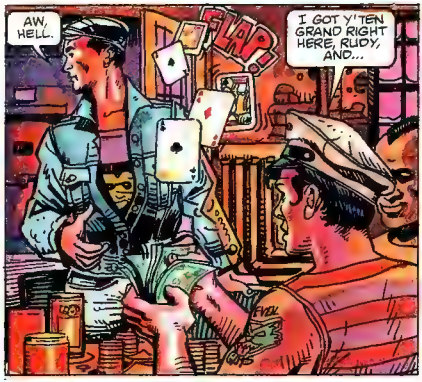


WELCOME TO BROOKLYN, GARDEN SPOT OF NEW YORK. OR WHAT USED TO BE NEW YORK. IT'S A MESS. NOBODY LIVES HERE NOW, AT LEAST NOBODY YOU'D WANT TO MEET. OUTCASTS AND MISFITS... REBELS. THE STREETS ARE A BATTLEGROUND. TAKE A STEP OFF YOUR OWN TURF, AND YOU'RE IN BIG TROUBLE. AND THEN, THERE'S THE **SANITATION POLICE**...


HEY, RUDY! THE GENERATOR'S OUT AGAIN!
...AND RAISE YOU $10,000.


RUDY!
IN A MINUTE, REBEL...
RUDY!!!

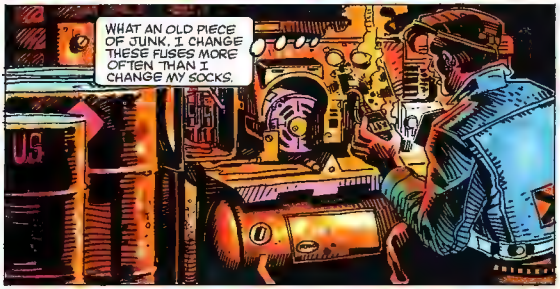

AW, HELL.
FLAP
I GOT Y'TEN GRAND RIGHT HERE, RUDY, AND...

IN THE OLD DAYS I COULD HAVE GOT BLASTED WITH THIS MUCH CASH. NOW IT'S NOT WORTH SHIT.

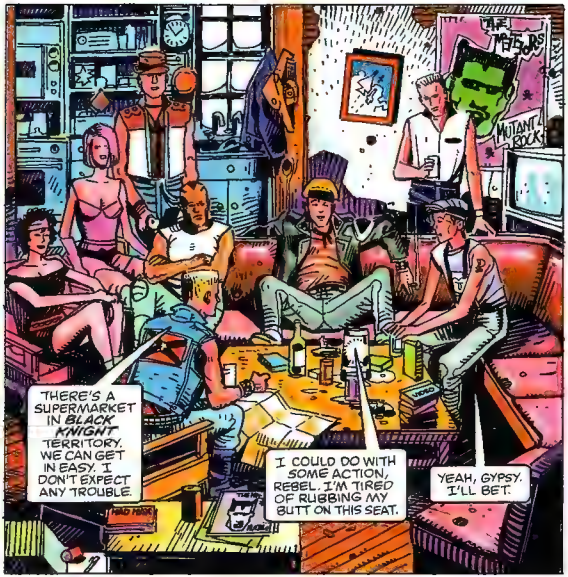
I WISH I DIDN'T HAVE TO KEEP ON THOSE GUYS SO MUCH, LOREL!.
AS LONG AS YOU KEEP ON ME, REBEL.
SURE!

EXIT
☆@#★! RUDY THIS, RUDY THAT! THE ONE TIME I GET A DECENT HAND, AND REBEL LETS GYPSY GET OFF THE HOOK! BAH!

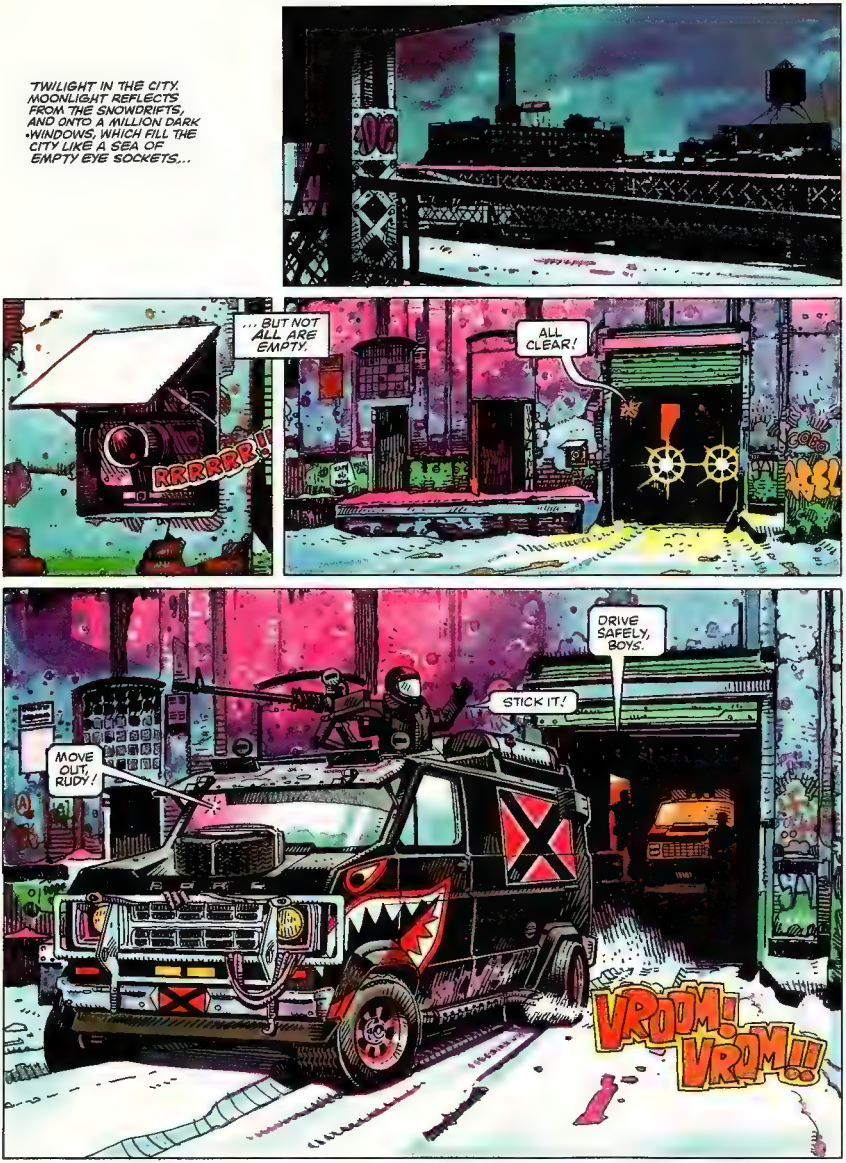
THESE DAYS YOU CAN'T CALL THE UTILITY COMPANY WHEN SOMETHING BREAKS. THEN AGAIN, THERE AREN'T ANY BILLS EITHER.



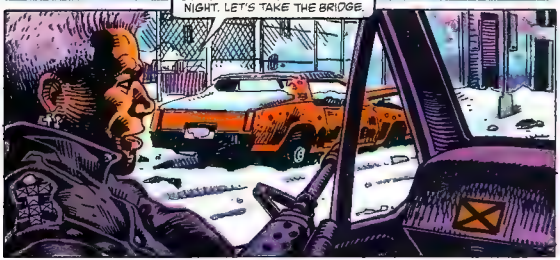
I GUESS IT'S TIME FOR ANOTHER SUPPLY RUN.
THE CITY'S A BIG WAREHOUSE. IT'S EASY TO FIND THE STUFF YOU NEED. THE HARD PART IS TO BRING IT HOME.

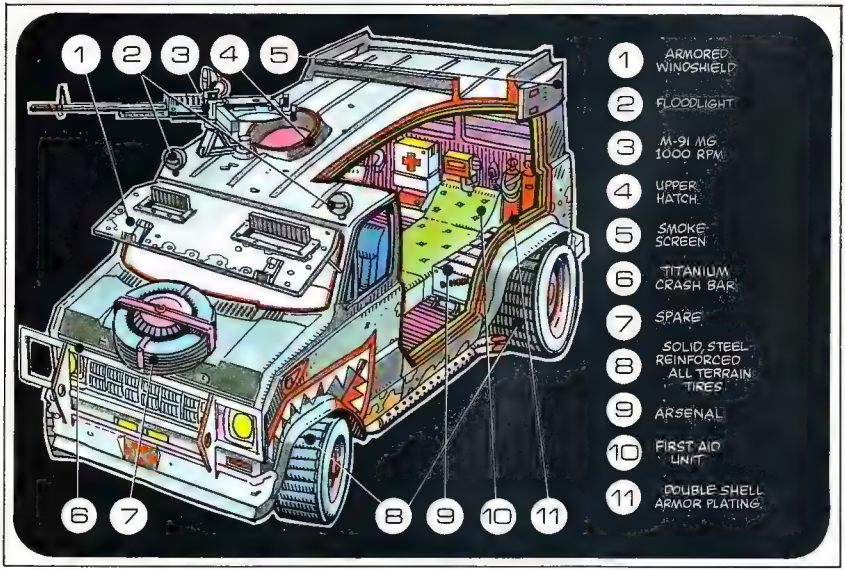

THERE'S A SUPERMARKET IN BLACK KNIGHT TERRITORY. WE CAN GET IN EASY. I DON'T EXPECT ANY TROUBLE.
I COULD DO WITH SOME ACTION, REBEL. I'M TIRED OF RUBBING MY BUTT ON THIS SEAT.
YEAH, GYPSY. I'LL BET.
MUTANT ROCK

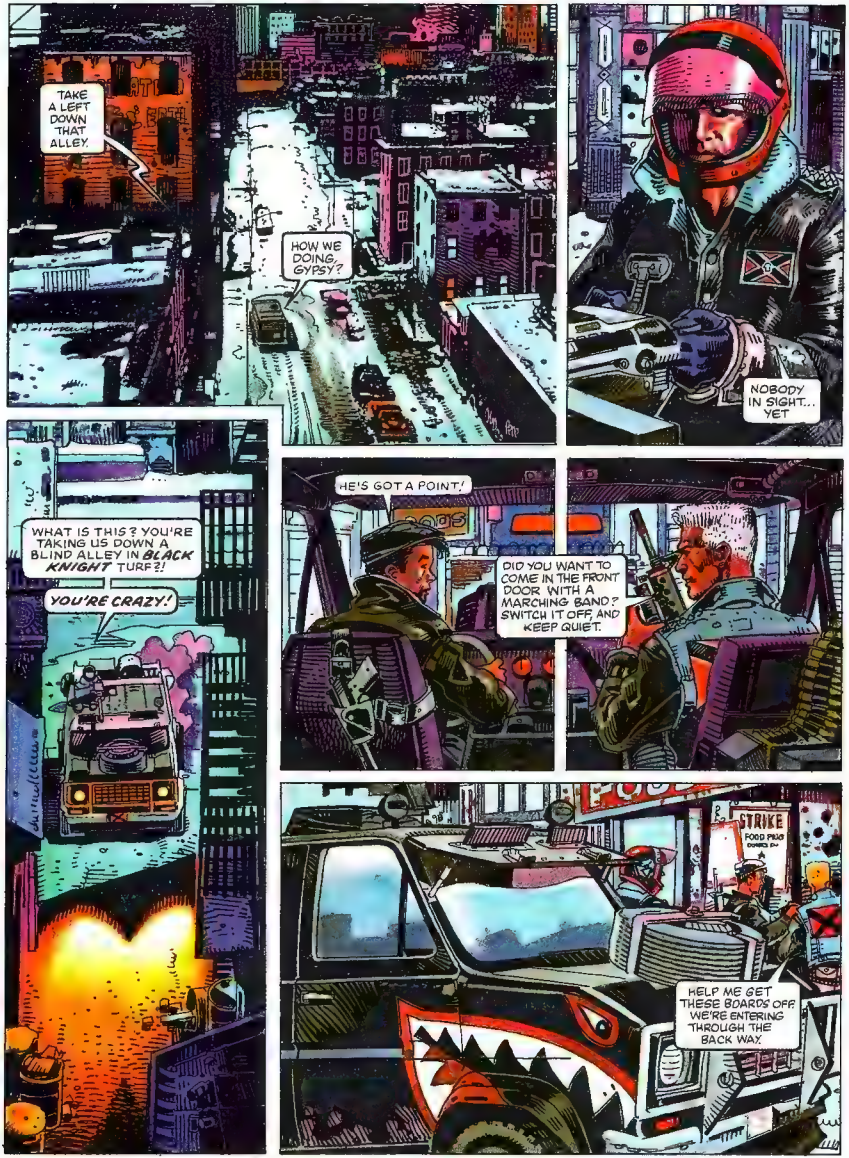
WE NEED FUSES, DRIED MEAT, ANTI-SEPTIC, CANNED VEGETABLES, ANY-THING ELSE?
WHAT ABOUT BEER?
YEAH! BIFF'S RIGHT, BEER!
WE ALWAYS RUN SHORT OF THAT!
I'M SICK AND TIRED OF YOU GUYS. IS THAT ALL YOU THINK ABOUT?
TEMPER! TEMPER!
ISN'T REBEL CUTE WHEN HE GETS MAD, LORELI?
YEAH, SHRIMP. THAT'S WHAT MADE ME FALL FOR HIM IN THE FIRST PLACE.
OKAY, OKAY. YOU TWO HAD BETTER GET READY...
OOPS!! HERE GOES THE LAST CAN.
POOFF!
WE DO IT TONIGHT!!


TWILIGHT IN THE CITY. MOONLIGHT REFLECTS FROM THE SNOWDRIFTS, AND ONTO A MILLION DARK WINDOWS, WHICH FILL THE CITY LIKE A SEA OF EMPTY EYE SOCKETS...
...BUT NOT ALL ARE EMPTY.
RRRRRR!!
ALL CLEAR!
DRIVE SAFELY, BOYS.
STICK IT!
MOVE OUT, RUDY!
VROOM! VROOM!!

HEY, YOU FORGOT TO PAY THE TOLL.
SHUDDUP, WILL YA?


LOOKS LIKE SOMEBODY DIDN'T MAKE IT HOME LAST NIGHT. LET'S TAKE THE BRIDGE.


1 ARMORED WINDSHIELD
2 FLOODLIGHT
3 M-91 MG 1000 RPM
4 UPPER HATCH
5 SMOKE SCREEN
6 TITANIUM CRASH BAR
7 SPARE
8 SOLID, STEEL-REINFORCED ALL TERRAIN TIRES
9 ARSENAL
10 FIRST AID UNIT
11 DOUBLE SHELL ARMOR PLATING


TAKE A LEFT DOWN THAT ALLEY.
HOW WE DOING, GYPSY?
NOBODY IN SIGHT... YET
WHAT IS THIS? YOU'RE TAKING US DOWN A BLIND ALLEY IN BLACK KNIGHT TURF?!
YOU'RE CRAZY!
HE'S GOT A POINT.
DID YOU WANT TO COME IN THE FRONT DOOR WITH A MARCHING BAND? SWITCH IT OFF, AND KEEP QUIET.
STRIKE
HELP ME GET THESE BOARDS OFF WE'RE ENTERING THROUGH THE BACK WAY.

LET'S GO
GYPSY! YOU STAY OUT HERE AND KEEP YOUR EYES OPEN
ALL RIGHT, JUST GET ME SOME m&m's!
LET'S MOVE!
RIGHT!
GAS FREE
CLOSED
ALL OF THE STORES ARE STARTING TO GET WORKED OUT NOW. EVEN THE DEHYDRATED CRAP IS GETTING SCARCE.
JUNE 1995... THIS SHOULD STILL BE GOOD.
DRIED BEER
DRIED FOODS
MRR
EWT!
OH...

WE WANT YOUR MONEY

A B C D E Photo by Michael Renchwich

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_____ black _____ white _____ grey

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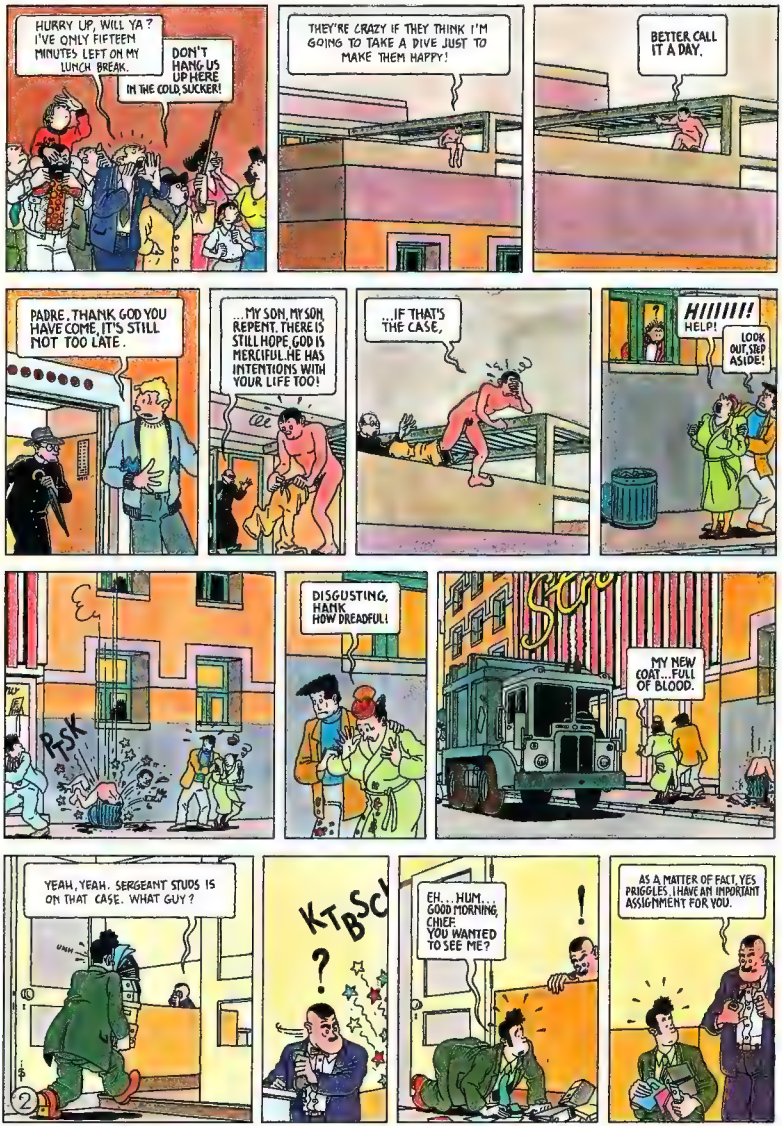
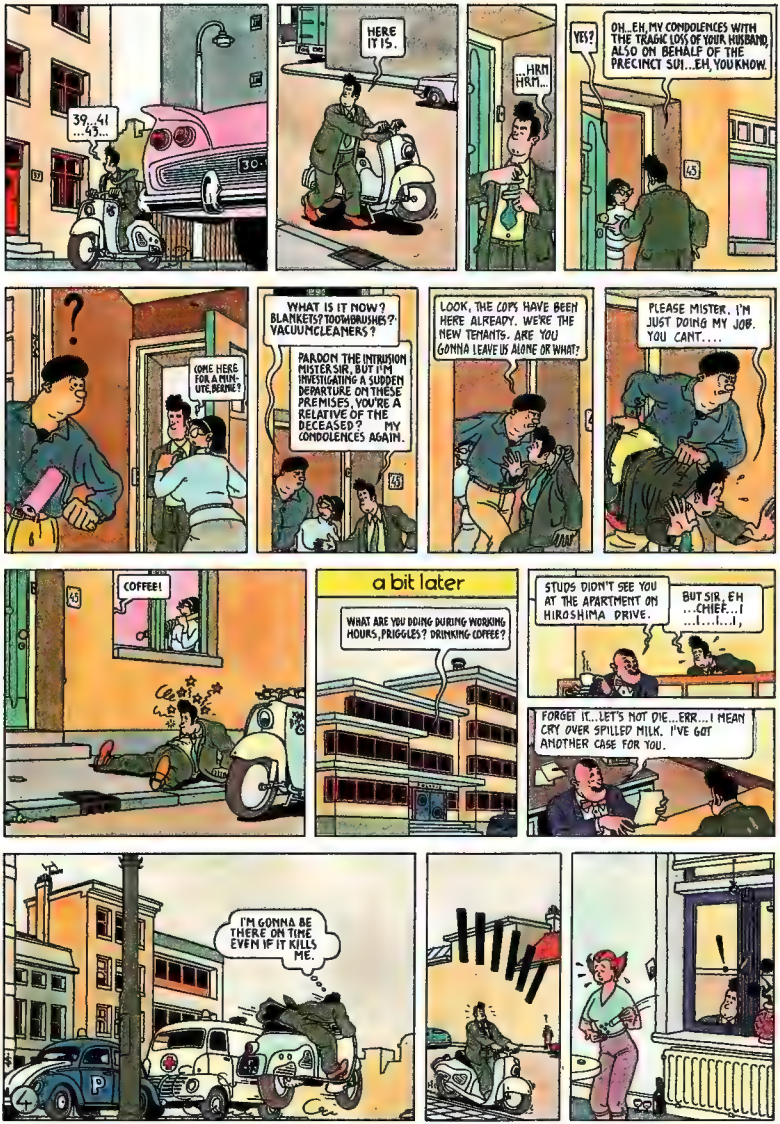
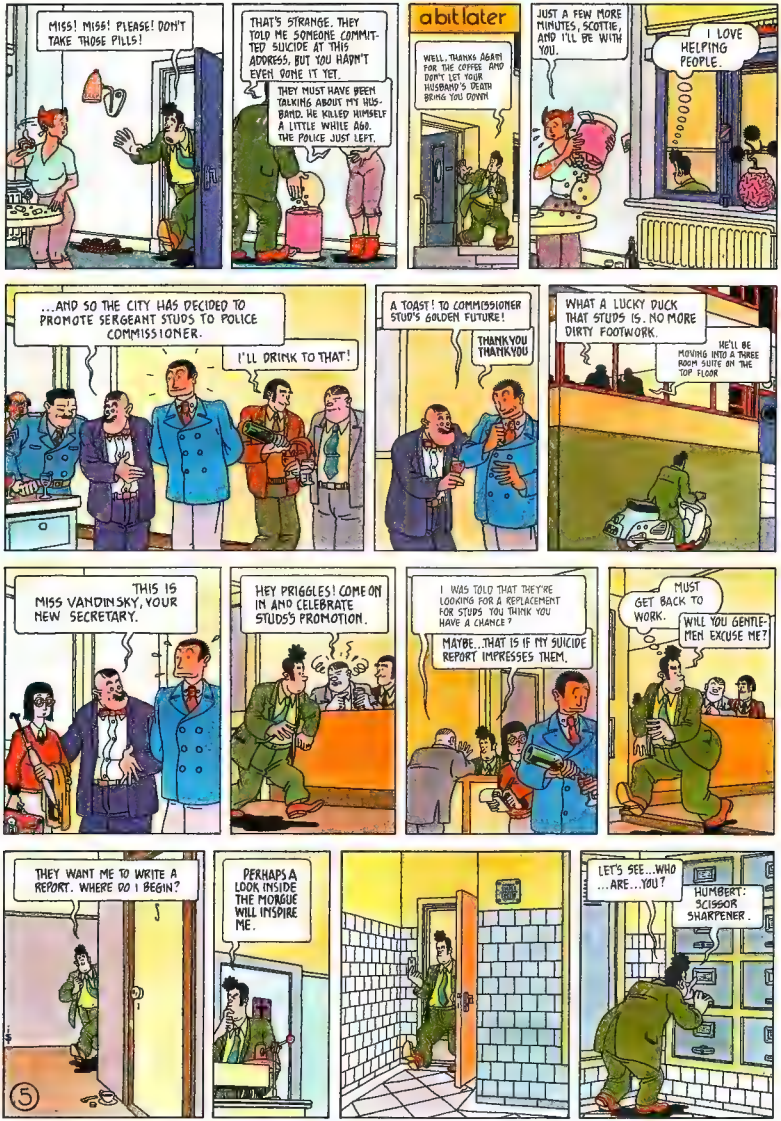
Goodbye

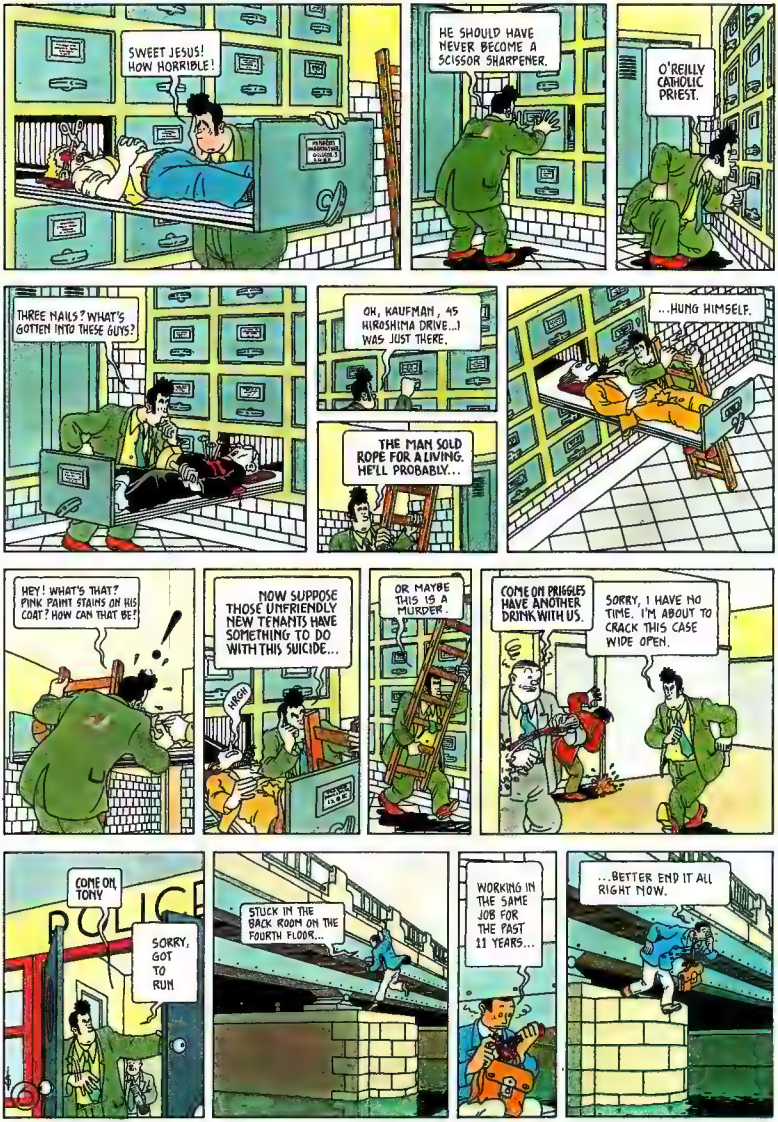
PLEASE COME QUICKLY. HE'S BEEN SITTING HERE STARK NAKED ON THE 7TH FLOOR BALCONY FOR AN HOUR.
WHAT A SHAME! HE COULD CATCH HIS DEATH OF COLD UP THERE GIVE HIM A COAT
THAT'S NOT ALL, PADRE. HE SAYS HE'S HAD IT WITH "THIS CRUEL, CRUEL WORLD."
GETTING COLD FEET MISTER?!
C'MON BIG BOY!
DON'T BE CHICKEN, JUMP!
TARZAN ..TARZAN!
Tomo

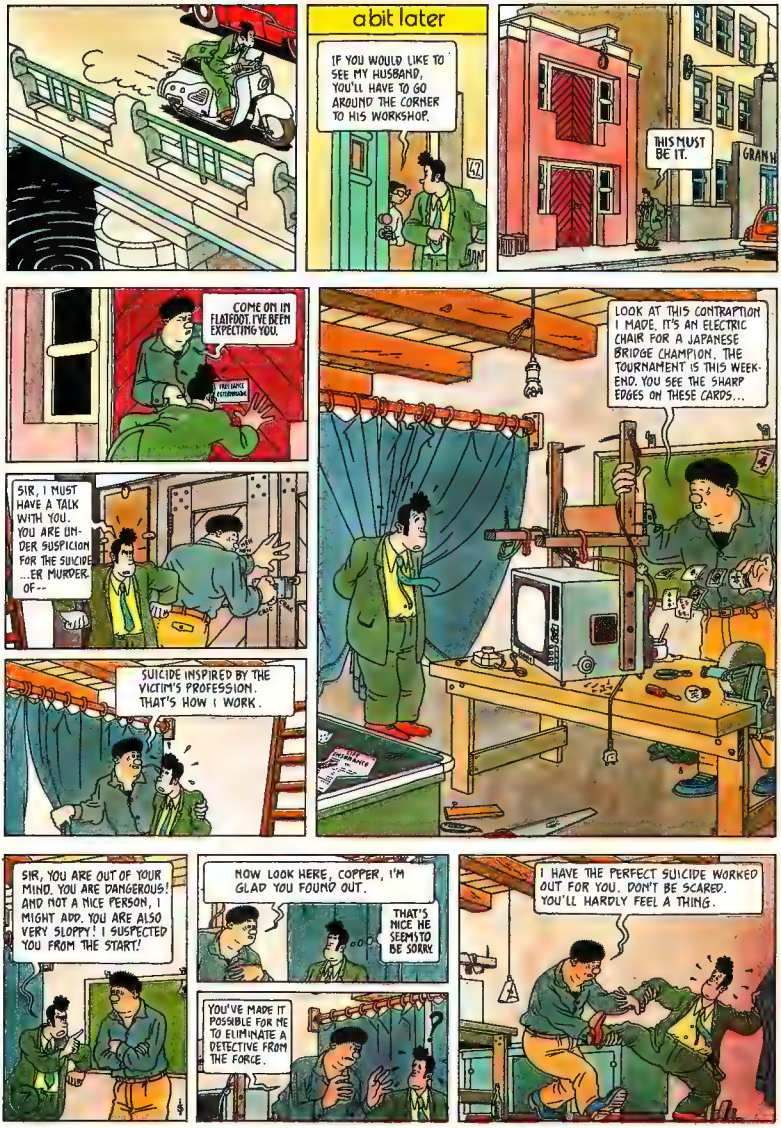

HURRY UP, WILL YA? I'VE ONLY FIFTEEN MINUTES LEFT ON MY LUNCH BREAK.
DON'T HANG US UP HERE IN THE COLD, SUCKER!
THEY'RE CRAZY IF THEY THINK I'M GOING TO TAKE A DIVE JUST TO MAKE THEM HAPPY!
BETTER CALL IT A DAY.
PADRE, THANK GOD YOU HAVE COME, IT'S STILL NOT TOO LATE.
...MY SON, MY SON, REPENT. THERE IS STILL HOPE, GOD IS MERCIFUL. HE HAS INTENTIONS WITH YOUR LIFE TOO!
...IF THAT'S THE CASE,
HHHHHH! HELP!
LOOK OUT, STEP ASIDE!
RSK
DISGUSTING, HANK HOW DREADFUL!
MY NEW COAT... FULL OF BLOOD.
YEAH, YEAH. SERGEANT STUDS IS ON THAT CASE. WHAT GUY?
UNH
KTBSC
?
EH... HUM... GOOD MORNING, CHIEF. YOU WANTED TO SEE ME?
!
AS A MATTER OF FACT, YES PRIGGLES. I HAVE AN IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT FOR YOU.

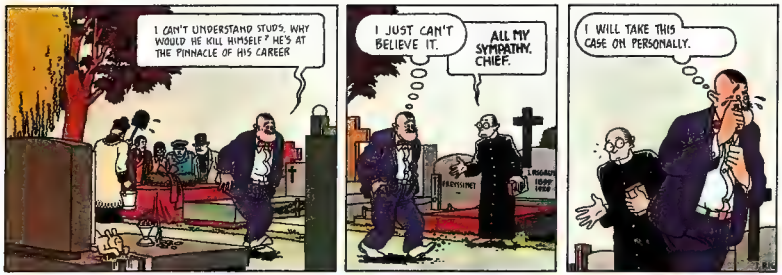
WHY DON'T YOU FORGET THAT JUNK FOR A WHILE AND COME WITH ME.
METHODS
...SERGEANT STUDS FROM SUICIDE HAS BEEN GOING AT IT TOO HARD LATELY.
PERHAPS HIS DEPARTMENT NEEDS AN EXTRA MAN.
WHAT'S TO KNOW?
MAY I SIT DOWN FOR A MOMENT.
NO, PRIGGLES, YOU GO AND GIVE HIM A HAND
ME? BUT I DON'T KNOW NOTHING ABOUT NO SUICIDES.
THIS FILE CONTAINS ALL THE DIFFERENT WAYS ONE CAN OFF THEMSELF.
AND OF COURSE THE MORGUE IS AT YOUR DISPOSAL. HAHA 'DISPOSAL'.
BUT WHY ME?
YOU'LL BE INVESTIGATING THE RECENT WAVE OF SUICIDES. SEE WHAT'S BEHIND ALL OF THEM. THERE MUST BE A CATCH!
ME?
YES YOU! AND I'LL BE EXPECTING A FULLY DETAILED REPORT FROM YOU. HERE'S PEN AND PAPER.
RRRR
3
HELLO... YES IM THE WHERE?
...45 HIROSHIMA DRIVE...WRITE THAT DOWN, PRIGGLES.
YES, THANKS A LOT.
HRUMPH! MY PLEASURE!
GET OVER THERE IMMEDIATELY, PRIGGLES. SOMEONE JUST KILLED THEMSELF.


39...41
...43...
HERE IT IS.
...HRM HRM...
YES?
OH...EH, MY CONDOLENCES WITH THE TRAGIC LOSS OF YOUR HUSBAND, ALSO ON BEHALF OF THE PRECINCT SUI...EH, YOU KNOW.
?
COME HERE FOR A MINUTE, DEARIE?
WHAT IS IT NOW? BLANKETS? TOOTHBRUSHES? VACUUM CLEANERS?
PARDON THE INTRUSION MISTER SIR, BUT I'M INVESTIGATING A SUDDEN DEPARTURE ON THESE PREMISES, YOU'RE A RELATIVE OF THE DECEASED? MY CONDOLENCES AGAIN.
LOOK, THE COPS HAVE BEEN HERE ALREADY. WE'RE THE NEW TENANTS. ARE YOU GONNA LEAVE US ALONE OR WHAT?
PLEASE MISTER. I'M JUST DOING MY JOB. YOU CAN'T....
COFFEE!
a bit later
WHAT ARE YOU DOING DURING WORKING HOURS, PRIGGLES? DRINKING COFFEE?
STUDS DIDN'T SEE YOU AT THE APARTMENT ON HIROSHIMA DRIVE.
BUT SIR, EH ...CHIEF...! ...!...!...!,
FORGET IT...LET'S NOT DIE...ERR...I MEAN CRY OVER SPILLED MILK. I'VE GOT ANOTHER CASE FOR YOU.
I'M GONNA BE THERE ON TIME EVEN IF IT KILLS ME.

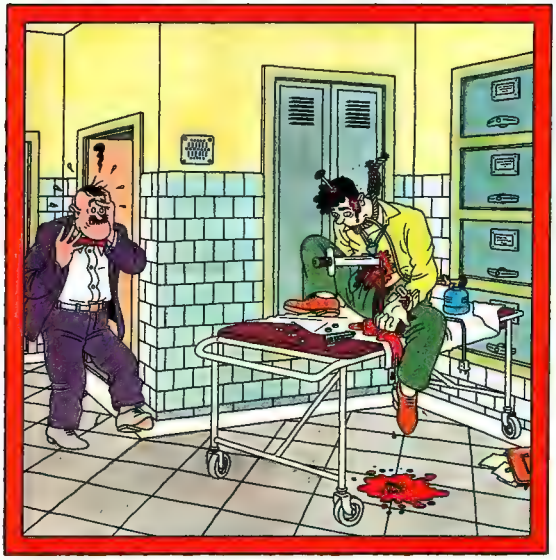

MISS! MISS! PLEASE! DON'T TAKE THOSE PILLS!
THAT'S STRANGE. THEY TOLD ME SOMEONE COMMITTED SUICIDE AT THIS ADDRESS, BUT YOU HAVN'T EVEN DONE IT YET.
THEY MUST HAVE BEEN TALKING ABOUT MY HUSBAND. HE KILLED HIMSELF A LITTLE WHILE AGO. THE POLICE JUST LEFT.
a bit later
WELL, THANKS AGAIN FOR THE COFFEE AND DON'T LET YOUR HUSBAND'S DEATH BRING YOU DOWN!
JUST A FEW MORE MINUTES, SCOTTIE, AND I'LL BE WITH YOU.
I LOVE HELPING PEOPLE.
...AND SO THE CITY HAS DECIDED TO PROMOTE SERGEANT STUDS TO POLICE COMMISSIONER.
I'LL DRINK TO THAT!
A TOAST! TO COMMISSIONER STUD'S GOLDEN FUTURE!
THANK YOU THANK YOU
WHAT A LUCKY DUCK THAT STUDS IS. NO MORE DIRTY FOOTWORK.
HE'LL BE MOVING INTO A THREE ROOM SUITE ON THE TOP FLOOR
THIS IS MISS VANDINSKY, YOUR NEW SECRETARY.
HEY PRIGGLES! COME ON IN AND CELEBRATE STUDS'S PROMOTION.
I WAS TOLD THAT THEY'RE LOOKING FOR A REPLACEMENT FOR STUDS. YOU THINK YOU HAVE A CHANCE?
MAYBE...THAT IS IF MY SUICIDE REPORT IMPRESSES THEM.
MUST GET BACK TO WORK.
WILL YOU GENTLEMEN EXCUSE ME?
THEY WANT ME TO WRITE A REPORT. WHERE DO I BEGIN?
PERHAPS A LOOK INSIDE THE MORGUE WILL INSPIRE ME.
5
LET'S SEE...WHO ...ARE...YOU?
HUMBERT: SCISSOR SHARPENER.


SWEET JESUS! HOW HORRIBLE!
HE SHOULD HAVE NEVER BECOME A SCISSOR SHARPENER.
O'REILLY CATHOLIC PRIEST.
THREE NAILS? WHAT'S GOTTEN INTO THESE GUYS?
OH, KAUFMAN, 45 HIROSHIMA DRIVE...I WAS JUST THERE.
THE MAN SOLD ROPE FOR A LIVING. HE'LL PROBABLY...
...HUNG HIMSELF.
HEY! WHAT'S THAT? PINK PAINT STAINS ON HIS COAT? HOW CAN THAT BE?
NOW SUPPOSE THOSE UNFRIENDLY NEW TENANTS HAVE SOMETHING TO DO WITH THIS SUICIDE...
HRGH
OR MAYBE THIS IS A MURDER.
COME ON PRIGGLES HAVE ANOTHER DRINK WITH US.
SORRY, I HAVE NO TIME. I'M ABOUT TO CRACK THIS CASE WIDE OPEN.
COME ON, TONY
POLICE
SORRY, GOT TO RUN
STUCK IN THE BACK ROOM ON THE FOURTH FLOOR...
WORKING IN THE SAME JOB FOR THE PAST 11 YEARS...
...BETTER END IT ALL RIGHT NOW.


a bit later
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO SEE MY HUSBAND, YOU'LL HAVE TO GO AROUND THE CORNER TO HIS WORKSHOP.
THIS MUST BE IT.
COME ON IN FLATFOOT. I'VE BEEN EXPECTING YOU.
SIR, I MUST HAVE A TALK WITH YOU. YOU ARE UNDER SUSPICION FOR THE SUICIDE ...ER MURDER OF--
LOOK AT THIS CONTRAPTION I MADE. IT'S AN ELECTRIC CHAIR FOR A JAPANESE BRIDGE CHAMPION. THE TOURNAMENT IS THIS WEEKEND. YOU SEE THE SHARP EDGES ON THESE CARDS...
SUICIDE INSPIRED BY THE VICTIM'S PROFESSION. THAT'S HOW I WORK.
SIR, YOU ARE OUT OF YOUR MIND. YOU ARE DANGEROUS! AND NOT A NICE PERSON, I MIGHT ADD. YOU ARE ALSO VERY SLOPPY! I SUSPECTED YOU FROM THE START!
NOW LOOK HERE, COPPER, I'M GLAD YOU FOUND OUT.
THAT'S NICE HE SEEMS TO BE SORRY.
YOU'VE MADE IT POSSIBLE FOR ME TO ELIMINATE A DETECTIVE FROM THE FORCE.
I HAVE THE PERFECT SUICIDE WORKED OUT FOR YOU. DON'T BE SCARED. YOU'LL HARDLY FEEL A THING.


I CAN'T UNDERSTAND STUDS. WHY WOULD HE KILL HIMSELF? HE'S AT THE PINNACLE OF HIS CAREER
I JUST CAN'T BELIEVE IT.
ALL MY SYMPATHY, CHIEF.
I WILL TAKE THIS CASE ON PERSONALLY.

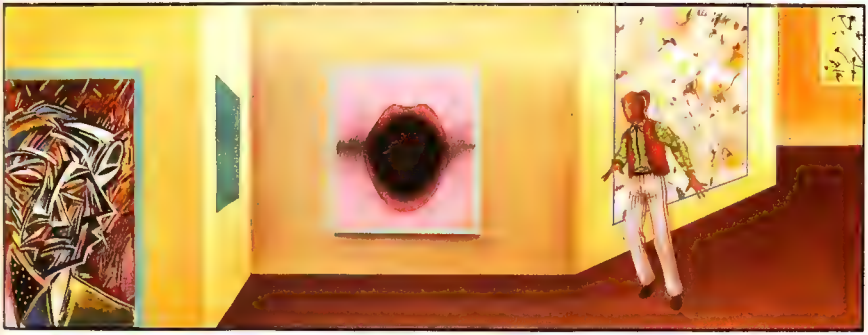
I'LL GET PRIGGLES TO HELP ME. HE SEEMS TO BE GETTING SOMEWHERE WITH HIS INVESTIGATION.
IS TONY PRIGGLES HERE?
YES CHIEF, HE'S IN THE MORGUE.
RIGHT'O!
MY GOD!

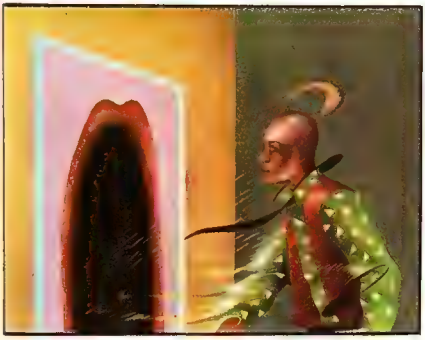


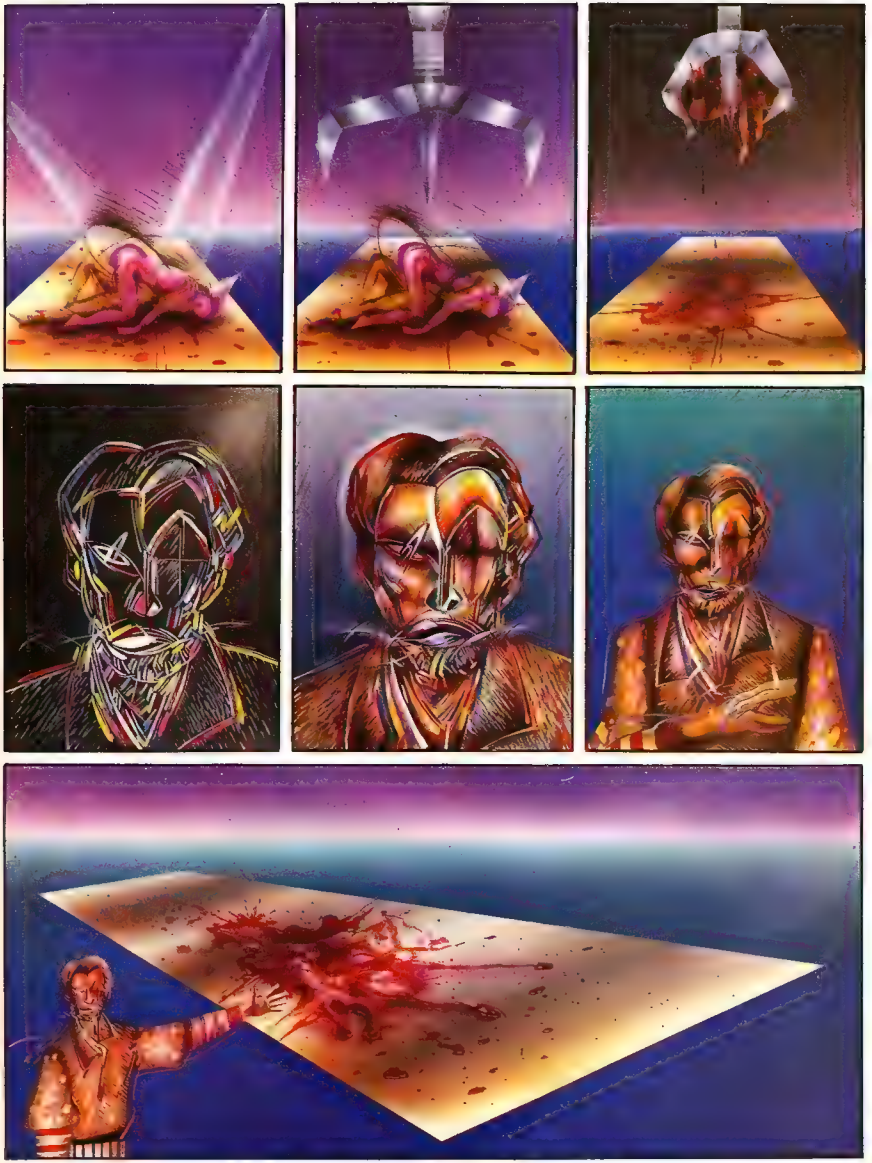
Goodbye

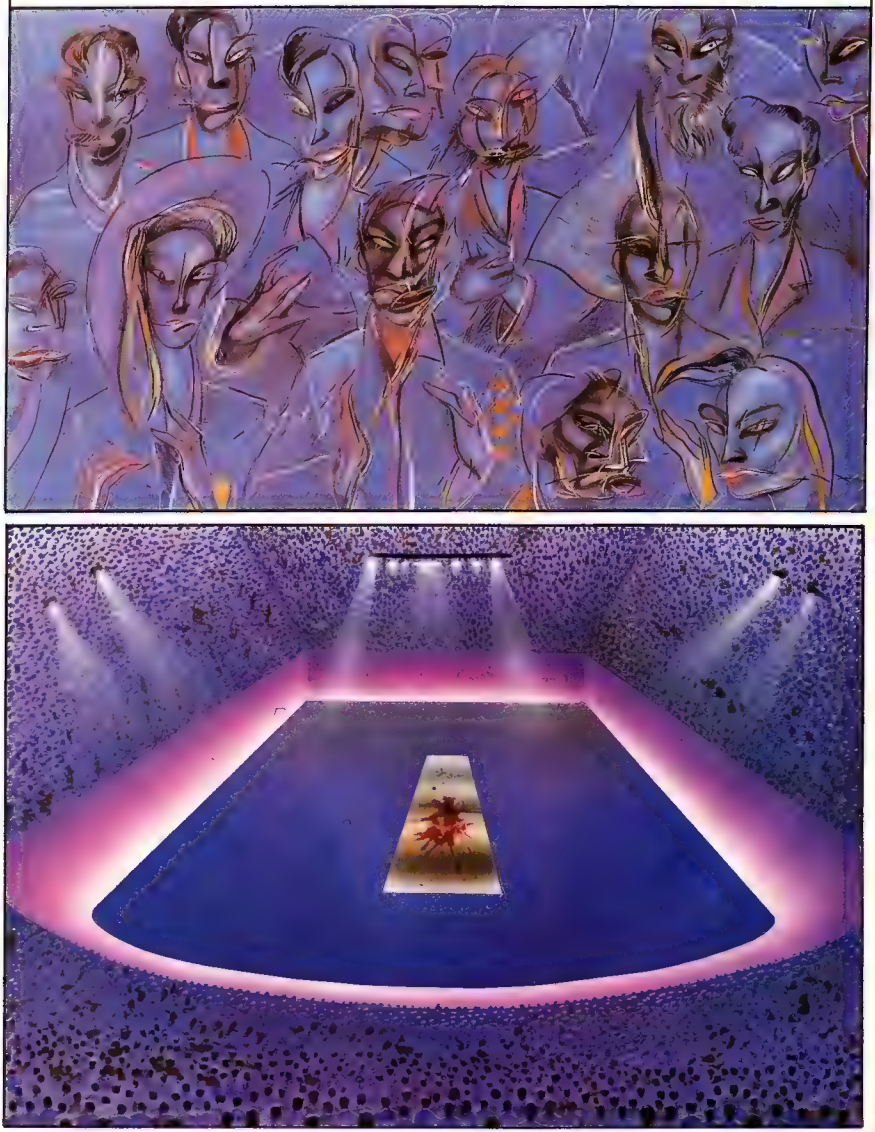
The Fighter

by Heriberto



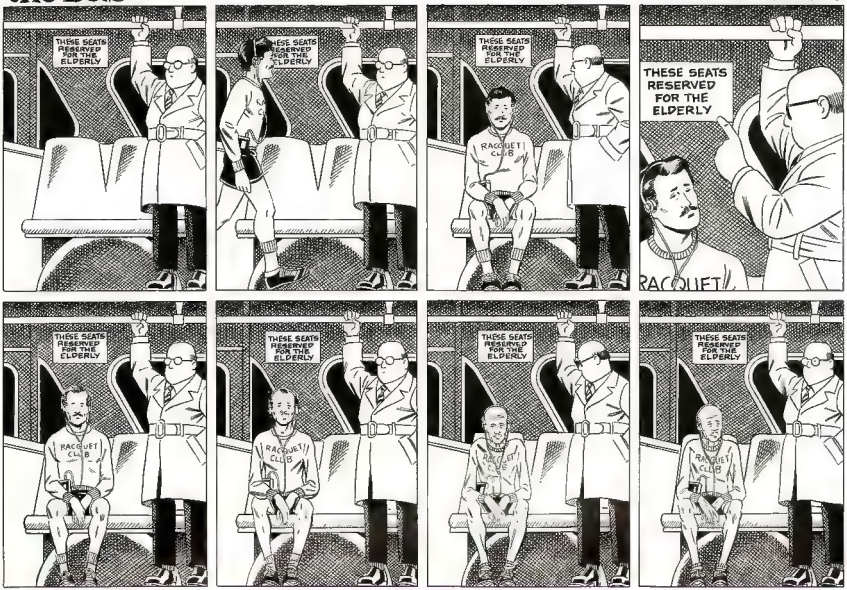






the bus

PAUL KIRCHNER ©



COMING:
• Daniel Torres's Armando Mistral ("Triton") returns!
• Will the Alice in Wonderland phenomenon ever end?
• Liberatore takes cover!

COLLECTOR'S ITEMS

#2/MAY '77: Russian astronauts, "Conquering Armies," the ultimate rock festival, and more.

#3/JUNE '77: Macedo's "Rockblitz," highly praised "Shells," beginning of Davis's "World Apart," Moebius, Corben, Bodé, more.

#4/JULY '77: Lots of Moebius: "Arzach," "The Long Tomorrow"; conclusion of "Sunpot."

#5/AUGUST '77: "Polonius" begins, "The Long Tomorrow" concludes, and "World Apart" and "Den" continue.

#6/SEPTEMBER '77: Roger Zelazny has a short story, and Moebius, a space opera; plus more "World Apart," "Den," and "Polonius."

#7/OCTOBER '77: Fiction by Theodore Sturgeon, Moebius's "Airtight Garage," "Den" and "Polonius" back again.

#8/NOVEMBER '77: New Harlan Ellison fiction, 9 color pages by Moebius and Rimbaud, conclusions for "Polonius" and "World Apart."

#9/DECEMBER '77: Extra pages for the complete "Vuzz," by Druillet, "Fortune's Fool," by Chaykin and Wein, plus full-color Corben, Macedo, Claveloux, and Moebius.

#10/JANUARY '78: Morrow illustrates Zelazny, Lob and Pichard update *Ulysses*, "Conquering Armies" concludes, "Den" continues.

#11/FEBRUARY '78: New adventures of "Barbarella," cover and center spread by Nino, plus Moebius and Corben.

#12/MARCH '78: Gray Morrow's swashbuckling "Orion" debuts; more "Barbarella," "Urm," and "Den."

#13/APRIL '78: Our 1st anniversary issue! A 30-page insert from "Paradise 9." "Barbarella" gives birth, while "Den" wraps it up.

#14/MAY '78: "Urm the Mad" waves bye-bye, but "Orion" and "Barbarella" continue, and Alex Nino tips his hat.

#15/JUNE '78: Corben introduces Shahrazad. Sturgeon's classic "More Than Human" is illustrated, more "Barbarella," and the origins of "Heilman."

#16/JULY '78: A happy ending for "Barbarella," a sad ending for "1996," resumption of Druillet's "Gail," more "Heilman," "Orion," "More Than Human," and Corben's "Arabian Nights."

#19/OCTOBER '78: "Exterminator 17," Ellison's illustrated "Glass Goblin," debut of McKie's "So Beautiful and So Dangerous."

#20/NOVEMBER '78: Twenty pages of the Delany/Chaykin "Empire," more "Sindbad," "Exterminator," Major Grubert, "Heilman" 's final rebirth, more.

#21/DECEMBER '78: The stocking's full with "Orion," Kirchner's "Tarot," and 12 beautiful pages of Moebius.

#22/JANUARY '79: Trina debuts and Druillet concludes "Gail," plus McKie and Corben.

#23/FEBRUARY '79: "Galactic Geographic," "Starcrown," Corben's "Sindbad," McKie's "So Beautiful and So Dangerous."

#24/MARCH '79: Twenty pages of Chaykin illustrating Bester's "The Stars My Destination," "Starcrown" II, and Ellison's late show.

#29/AUGUST '79: Caza steals show with "New Ark City," plus Mayerik, Suydam, "Galactic Geographic," Bodé, more.

#30/SEPTEMBER '79: "Elric," "Buck Rogers," a lizard named "Elvis," and "Little Red V-3," alongside Montellier and Moebius.

#31/OCTOBER '79: A Halloween tribute to H. P. Lovecraft, with Moebius, Breccia, Druillet, Suydam, others.

#32/NOVEMBER '79: Corben's "Rowlf," Bodé's "Zooks," Brunner's "Elric," Chaykin's "The Stars My Destination," Moebius, and more.

#33/DECEMBER '79: A Christmas package from Caza, Corben, Kofoed, Suydam, Stiles, Trina, Moebius, and Ellison, plus "Gnomes" and "Giants."

#35/FEBRUARY '80: An eerie Gouratin cover adorns this issue. Corben's "The Beast of Wolfton" begins, McKie experiments with the Air Pump, and we join Matt Howarth on a crazed acid trip.

#36/MARCH '80: Why did "The Crevasse" take Jeannette? Read the Schuiten strip! Plus: Corben, Matena, Moebius, and Lee Marrs's "Good Vibrations."

#37/APRIL '80: Our 3rd anniversary issue—32 pages of "Champakou" in living color, final installment of Moebius's "Airtight Garage," plus Caza, Bilal, Howarth, Corben, Bodé—and more!

#38/MAY '80: Does the Supreme Alchemist exist? Will Axle ever find out? Will "Champakou" reach the Doll of Jade? Will Joe strike out with the alien Marilyn, too?

#39/JUNE '80: "Champakou" meets his fate, while "Captain Sternn" saves the day. And it's the Flying Wallendas vs. Earth!

#41/AUGUST '80: Druillet returns with "Salammbo" while Moebius concludes "Shore Leave" (and is interviewed). Bilal continues "Progress!"

#42/SEPTEMBER '80: "The Alchemist Supreme" concludes while Bilal's "Progress!" picks up steam. Ernie Colon, Paul Kirchner, Leo Duranona contribute nifty shorts, while "Rock Opera" gets stranger.

#49/APRIL '81: Corben's "Bloodstar," Giménez's "Good-bye, Soldier!," Harry North's "Stories from London," and an interview with Julio Ribera.

#50/MAY '81: Premiers of Chaykin's "Cody Starbuck" and Bilal's "The Immortals' Fête!" Plus: Suydam's "The Toll Bridge" and William S. Burroughs on immortality.

#51/JUNE '81: The 1st part of the Richard Corben interview, Jim Steranko's adaptation of *Outland* premieres, Howarth's "Changes" winds up. Plus: Caza, Chaykin, Crepax, and Workman!

#56/NOVEMBER '81: Jeronaton's "Egg of the World," Jeff Jones, Segrelles, and Bilal all frame the art of Leo and Diane Dillon beautifully.

#58/JANUARY '82: Our "Happy Future" issue. Includes Arno, Loustal, Voss, Hé, and Gillon; and "The Autonomous Man," all surrounded by Chaykin and Simonson, Segrelles, and Steranko.

#59/FEBRUARY '82: The further adventures of John Difool in "The Incal Light." Wein and Chaykin's "Gideon Faust" gets going—again. Plus Fernandez, Jones, Schuiten.

#60/MARCH '82: 2nd Special Rock Issue featuring Dick Matena's "A Life in the Day," a surrealistic look at the life of John Lennon. Luis Garcia's "Nova 2" begins. Plus "Mercenary," "Den," "Rock Opera," etc.

#61/APRIL '82: 5th anniversary issue offers a variety of material. What with Claveloux, Druillet, Moebius, Bilal, and an essay on J. G. Ballard, you'll be busy until our 6th!

#62/MAY '82: The 1st part of David Black's "Third Sexual Revolution." "The Art of De Es Schwertberger." Plus: "Sixteen and Vanilla" by Ted White and Val Lakey.

#63/JUNE '82: Fantastic Cities issue, with artists Voss, Caza, Scibelli, and R. Crumb, all surrounded by regulars: Druillet, Moebius, Schuiten, and Fernandez.

#64/JULY '82: Marcele and Lacome's strange "Life at the Circus" and pages from Corben's *Flights into Fantasy*. Plus Jones, Garcia, and Druillet.

#65/AUGUST '82: Jones and Wrightson's "Freak Show" and Pisu and Manara's "The Ape. ." Plus the finale of "The Incal Light" by Moebius and Jodorowsky.

#66/SEPTEMBER '82: Hecht's "Music-Video Interface," Lupoff's "Barsoom!" and Hinge's "Object." Plus our regulars: Bilal, Fernandez, Kierkegaard.

#67/OCTOBER '82: You'll have Scary Dreams after reading our special horror section. Everything from Eddie Poe to the weirdest phobias possible. Don't read it alone! P.S.: Last part of Black's "Third Sexual Revolution."

#68/NOVEMBER '82: Part 1 of Kaluta's "Starstruck." Findley's "Tex Arcana" continues as does "Den II" and Druillet's "Yragael." Plus: a peek at Wrightson's *National Lampoon's Class Reunion*.

#69/DECEMBER '82: A Will Stone Gallery, the return of Suydam's "Mudwog," and Mark Fisher's "Amino Men." Plus Corben, Fernandez, and Kierkegaard.

#70/JANUARY '83: The strange conclusion to Wrightson's "Freak Show," a look at *The Dark Crystal*, and regulars Manara, Corben, Fernandez, etc.

#71/FEBRUARY '83: The making of the film *The Entity*, Kim Deitch's *Eating Raoul*, and regulars Corben, Kaluta, Crepax, etc.

#72/MARCH '83: We bid a fond farewell to Den and Kath, and a warm welcome to Bilal's "City that Didn't Exist." A Gallery on Robert Williams, plus Manara, Kaluta and more.

#73/APRIL '83: Moebius's "The Twinkle in Fildegar's Eye," and Sauri's "The Odyssey," along with Kaluta, Crepax, and Workman.

#75/JUNE '83: Corben's "Doomsculpt," the end of Crepax's "The Man from Harlem," and a peek at the 3-D science fiction thriller, *Spacehunter*.

#76/JULY '83: Liberatore's "Ranxerox," the end of Kulata's "Starstruck" (for the time being), an interview with Dan O'Bannon and a glimpse at Ray Bradbury's *Dinosaur Tales*.

#77/AUGUST '83: Arno and Jodorowsky's "The Small Earthworm" debuts. Giménez's "A Matter of Time" appears, and Captain Beefheart is interviewed, all behind a beautiful Greg Hildebrandt cover.

#78/SEPTEMBER '83: An exclusive interview with Francis Ford Coppola! Plus a Gallery look at the art of Rowena Morrill and the conclusions of "Zora" and "The City that Didn't Exist."

#79/OCTOBER '83: Timothy Leary! Enki Bilal! Pepe Moreno! Walter Hill! Rocky and Bullwinkle!?! A great issue!

#80/NOVEMBER '83: A spirited talk with Will Eisner, along with a Spirit story. Plus Crepax's "Valentina the Pirate." Enjoy.

#81/DECEMBER '83: Ranxerox bows out. Valentina comes on strong. Artist Liberatore is interviewed. Lots more!

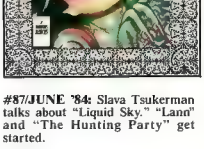
#82/JANUARY '84: Part one of David Blacks vampire memoirs. Plus "Ranxerox in New York," and a peek at Arthur Clarke's *The Sentinel*.

#83/FEBRUARY '84: Douglas Trumbull talks. John DiFool returns. And David Black's *My Vampires* comes to an end.

#84/MARCH '84: Douglas Adams is interviewed. Angus McKie and Charles Burns return. Ranxerox ends his New York adventure.

#85/APRIL '84: A long talk with Roger Corman. Plus Joe Kubert in "Dossier" and Boris Vallejo on the cover.

#86/MAY '84: "The Railways" begins, "Ranxerox" ends, and "The Third Incal" continues. Plus, two "June 2050"s for the price of one.



#87/JUNE '84: Slava Tsukerman talks about "Liquid Sky." "Lann" and "The Hunting Party" get started.

#88/JULY '84: Long interviews with funnymen John Cleese and Jerry Lewis. Long-awaited art from Jeronaton.

#89/AUGUST '84: Paul Kantner: *Starship* Captain. Penelope Spheeris: Godmother of Punk. Ed Naha: Good Writer of Bad Movies.

#90/SEPTEMBER '84: The Second Annual *HM* Music Video Awards. Lou Stathis interviews director David Cronenberg. Plus *Dernier Combat* director Luc Besson is interviewed.

#91/OCTOBER '84: The *HM* interview with director John Sayles. Caza drops by, and Jeronaton and Bilal continue.

#92/NOVEMBER '84: Schuiten begins, Jeronaton ends, and Paul Kirchner gives us some "Cool." Plus, shock-director John Waters tells us about his morals in the *HM* interview.

#93/DECEMBER '84: *HM*'s 1984 *fin* with a Federico Fellini interview and a Boris Vallejo Gallery. Plus, Manara's "Author" gets to work.

#94/JANUARY '85: Interview with director Wolfgang Petersen. Liberatore presents his latest, "Sax Blues." And yet another "Marlowskitz."

#95/FEBRUARY '85: Russell Mulcahy, Rock video's premiere director, talks about his new movie, *Razorback*. Also, Jack Davis is interviewed and "Triton" concludes.

#96/MARCH '85: The premiere of Pepe Moreno's "Rebel." Interview with director Louis Malle, and the end of Bilal and Christin's "The Hunting Party" and Schuiten's "Walls of Samaris."

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THE EDWARD D. WOOD, JR. PLAYERS TRADING CARDS

6 Cards From A Series Of 24...Collect 'Em All!

El BORBAH
BONE of Voyage
STORY SO FAR: EL BORBAH HAS BEEN HIRED TO FIND WALDA KISSLING... WHILE FOLLOWING AN OBSCURE CLUE HE STUMBLES ONTO A SECRET ORGANIZATION CALLED BROTHERS OF THE BONE. AT THIS MOMENT THEY'RE AFTER HIS ASS.
WHAT THE HELL ARE YOU LOOKIN' AT UGLY?
©1984 K BURNS
THERE HE IS! DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY!
OUTTA MY WAY... I'M COMING THROUGH!
BANG! BANG!

A MINUTE LATER...
MAN, I'M GLAD TO GET OUT OF THAT PSYCHO WARD...THIS CASE IS STARTING TO COOK!
EEEEEEEEEEEE
SOMEHOW THAT MISSING CHICK IS TIED IN WITH THOSE WISHBONE BOYS, BUT I JUST CAN'T FIGURE IT YET.
ANYHOW, I GOT SOME SERIOUS BUSINESS TO TAKE CARE OF...FIRST THE PHOTOSTORE...
...AND $2.95 IS YOUR CHANGE. WOULD YOU LIKE AN ENTRYFORM FOR OUR "AMERICA'S COMING BACK STRONG" PHOTO CONTEST?
ONLY $1.95
HUH...IF THEY HAD A CONTEST FOR BIGGEST AIRHEAD THEY'D HAVE TO GIVE YOU FIRST PRIZE.
YES, SIR. HAVE A NICE DAY, AND THANK YOU FOR SHOPPING PHOTOLAND!
WOW! WE'RE TALKING PORNO!
IT'S HER... IT'S WALDA, AND SHE'S MAKIN' IT WITH SOME OLD GEEZER...
...AND THE OLD GEEZER HAS SOME SORT OF TATOO ON HIS BACK...
... SHAPED LIKE... A WISHBONE.

CREEPIN' CHRIST ALMIGHTY! THIS CASE GETS WEIRDER BY THE MINUTE!
I GOTTA TRACK DOWN SOMEONE WHO CAN SORT THIS OUT FOR ME...
BUY NOW!!
...AND I THINK I KNOW WHERE I CAN FIND THAT SOMEONE.
TWENTY MINUTES LATER...
HMM...LOOKS LIKE THE DOC IS EXPECTING COMPANY...
HI THERE FELLAS...COULD I INTEREST ANY OF YOU IN SOME FREE FLYING LESSONS?
TWENTY SECONDS LATER...
DON'T BOTHER GETTING UP, GUYS... I CAN LET MYSELF IN.
YOU! HOW ON EARTH DID YOU GET IN HERE!
HOWDY DOC... TO TELL THE TRUTH, I HAD TO THUMP A FEW HEADS...
SPEAKING OF WHICH... YOU KNOW THE PART OF YOUR FACE THAT'S IN THE MIDDLE?
WELL, I'M GOING TO HAVE TO MOVE IT OVER TO THE SIDE UNLESS YOU COME CLEAN WITH ME ABOUT WALDA.

PLEASE... DON'T HURT ME! I KNOW I LIED BEFORE, BUT NOW I'LL TELL YOU ANYTHING! I PROMISE!
YOU CAN START BY TELLING ME WHO THOSE DUDES ALL DRESSED UP IN SHEETS ARE...
THE BROTHERHOOD... THE BROTHERS OF THE BONE, THEY'RE A GROUP OF RICH BUSINESSMEN WHO WERE BORED AND DISSATISFIED WITH THEIR LIVES...
...SO FOR EXCITEMENT THEY FORMED AN ILLEGAL ORGANIZATION INVOLVED WITH DRUGS, PROSTITUTION AND GAMBLING.
WHERE DO YOU TIE IN WITH THESE BONE BOYS?
MY RESEARCH DEALS WITH THE DEVELOPMENT OF VARIOUS UH... ILLEGAL COMPOUNDS... ABOUT A YEAR AGO THE BROTHERHOOD OFFERED ME THE MONEY AND PROTECTION I NEEDED TO CONTINUE MY EXPERIMENTS...
IN RETURN I WOULD HAND OVER ALL OF MY DISCOVERIES TO THEM... I FOUND IT A VERY SUITABLE ARRANGEMENT UNTIL YOU SHOWED UP...
I SHOWED UP LOOKING FOR A LOST CHICK NAMED WALDA...
WHAT I TOLD YOU BEFORE ABOUT WALDA WAS VERY CLOSE TO THE TRUTH, I HIRED HER AS AN ASSISTANT...
SHE WAS FINE UNTIL SHE BECAME INVOLVED WITH THE BROTHERHOOD... I DON'T KNOW THE DETAILS, BUT SHE GOT INTO SOME SORT OF TROUBLE WITH THEM... AND THEN DISAPPEARED.

HEY! QUIT MESSIN' WITH THAT THING AND TELL ME WHERE SHE DISAPPEARED TO!
I'M NOT SURE, BUT I RECALL RANKO MENTIONING SOMETHING ABOUT SEEING HER AT THE BONA VILLA...
HUH?
THE BONA VILLA...IT'S SORT OF AN ENTERTAINMENT RESORT FOR THE BROTHERHOOD. IT WOULD BE IMPOSSIBLE TO FIND HER... THE SECURITY IS TOO TIGHT.
MAYBE NOT SO IMPOSSIBLE IF I'VE GOT YOU ALONG AS AN ESCORT... LET'S GET GOING, I'LL LAY IT ALL OUT FOR YOU WHILE YOU'RE DRIVING.
TWO HOURS LATER...
Y-YOU'RE CRAZY! IT'LL NEVER WORK! THEY'LL KILL ME!
AW, QUIT YOUR DAMN WHINING AND KEEP YOUR EYES ON THE ROAD LAMEBRAIN!
WE'RE ALMOST THERE!
PULL OVER...I'VE GOTTA GET THIS HALF-ASSED COSTUME ON...
O.K. DOC... IF YOU JUST TAKE IT EASY AND REMEMBER WHAT I TOLD YOU, WE MIGHT GET OUT OF THIS IN ONE PIECE...
YOUR I.D. PLEASE.
Y-YES, OF COURSE!
THANK YOU DOCTOR, YOU CAN DRIVE RIGHT THROUGH.

WE'RE HERE
DIG IT.
PARK RIGHT HERE AND DON'T MOVE AN INCH UNTIL I GET BACK...
REMEMBER DOC, YOU'RE IN THIS AS DEEP AS I AM SO DON'T GET ANY IDEAS ABOUT BLOWIN' THE WHISTLE ON ME!
HUH...I GUESS THIS IS THE WAY IN...
GOOD EVENING SIR, MAY I HELP YOU WITH YOUR ROBE?
MY ROBE? UH...THANKS BUT I THINK I'LL KEEP IT ON FOR NOW.
CONTINUED

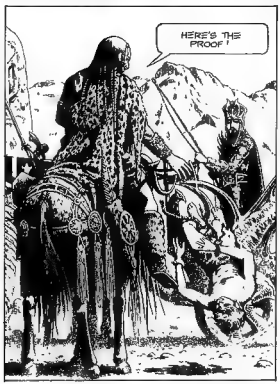
THE VENGEANCE OF ARN, FRAGMENTS.

by Dionnet and Gal

I HOPE CARAC WAS SUCCESSFUL, OTHERWISE

GREETINGS, CREATOR.
GREETINGS, CARAC

EVERY-THING WENT WELL


HERE'S THE PROOF!

HERE IS RONAN'S SON, JUST AS YOU HAD REQUESTED

PERFECT!
YOUR NAME IS ARN AND YOU'RE TEN YEARS OLD. YOU WILL LEARN TO LIKE ME.
HEY!
YOU DIRTY...
BARBARIAN!
I SHOULD KILL YOU FOR USING THE WORD "BARBARIAN" AS AN INSULT.

THEY TELL ME LIFE IS SHORT-LIVED IN THE EMPIRE'S QUARRIES.
BUT YOU WILL DISCOVER THAT, FOR THOSE WHO LIVE THERE, TIME STANDS STILL.

end

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